

## 7. Not long to go now.

\*Aleksa\*

I couldn't sleep last night. My anxiety was next level. I kept going over and over our plan of escape, trying to think of possible scenarios and solutions for any trouble we might come across. I just pray it all goes to plan. All of our safety depends on it. If we get caught trying to ee, I just know I will be locked up indenitely or, even worse, killed for my actions. I will never be able to see my pups again. Not to mention the penalties Caleb and Kali would face for betraying their alpha to help us escape. The penalty would surely be death. Then there's Mason and Kaia to think about. No, I can't entertain these thoughts. I need to think positively. We can do this. We have to do this.

I am really glad that I met Mason and Kaia, even though it's only been a few days. We just clicked and seemed to be on the same wavelength. I look forward to getting to know them more as time goes by. Mason and Kaia have decided to come with the twins and I to Colorado, to start afresh there. Hopefully, we can nd a pack to settle into. But even if we don't, we will just be happy settling anywhere, even in a human town.

Caleb and Kali will most likely seek refuge in her cousin's pack, which is a few states over. They won't be going back to Kali's birth pack because it is too close and she doesn't want the pack to face any retaliation because of their actions. Lachlan has no knowledge of her cousin's pack, so they should be safe there. It's also probably a good idea that we go in separate directions to mislead the trackers.

I must say life was not going to be the same without Caleb. He has been such a big part of my life. He has been my rock. And I feel so bad uprooting his and Kali's lives like this. But I have to focus on getting the twins and myself to a safe place, so I can't dwell on my feelings of guilt.

It must be early morning now, because I can hear the trap door to the dungeon creaking open. I saw a icker of light in this cold, damp and darkened dungeon. And as fast as it appears, it is gone and we are submerged in darkness again. I hear footsteps walking down the stairs. I can smell freshly brewed coffee. What I would give for a strong hot coffee right now I thought to myself.

I heard Chad's voice and I felt a surge of anxiousness. Not long to go now. Several hours from now and we will set our plan in motion. I just hope everything falls into place.

Chad walked up to my cell. "Luna, I don't understand why you are still here? I'm sure the alpha will let you out if you just agree with his conditions. Just think of Liam and Layla. They will be missing you greatly". Chad pleads.

I look up to Chad and there is so much I want to say right now. I am furious that I am just expected to live with my mates' indelity. To just be his sidepiece when it suits him. I am supposed to be some subservient luna who tends to her duties and plays blind to things that happen right before my eyes? And then he has the nerve to guilt trip me into thinking it is I that is doing wrong to my own children! I voice internally to myself.

I need to keep in Chad's good graces for now. I need to play along so that I can get out of here. "I wish it were that simple, Chad. I think I just need more time. It will sort itself out eventually, I'm sure". I say with a half smile and I look towards the ground so he can't sense the insincerity in my eyes.

"Luna, if you will excuse me, I must make my rounds. I really hope Lachlan and you can work this out, sooner rather than later. I will check in on you a little later. Breakfast should be down shortly". Chad says, then he bows his head and continues on back the way he came.

Since I've been down in the dungeon, I've had two meals sent to me a day. The other prisoners are lucky if they get one small meal a day. So I've been sharing mine with Mason and Kaia when no one is looking. We will need to have as much strength as we can muster for this escape. I also believe it to be incredibly cruel that people are treated this way. I guess when you are in a privileged position you are unaware of how lucky you are, and are blinded to many of the injustices that surround you.

\*Mason POV\*

I am twenty-three years old, 6'4, with a large muscular build and a dark tan from spending so much time outdoors. I have short golden blonde hair and bright blue eyes. I am an unmated wolf, and I wonder at times if I will ever get the privilege of meeting my fated mate, but I live in hope. I was Beta to Alpha Grayson of the Blood Moon Pack. I had trained all my life to become a Beta, and I had come from generations of Beta's. I took my role in the pack seriously and I like to think of myself as rm but fair. I had known Grayson since we were children, we went to school together and we had always known we were destined to lead the pack. Grayson was such a great guy to be around, and I was sure that he would make a great alpha when the time came. Unfortunately, sometimes in life people change, and not always for the better.

When Grayson turned eighteen years of age, he started to become more aggressive. Although he had always been a bit of a playboy with the she-wolves, it took a turn for the worse around this time. He started to change his behavior around women and started to get quite rough and abusive towards them. He seemed to be drinking more often than not and becoming enraged and irrational, which is a hard feat for wolves, because generally alcohol doesn't affect us, but when taken in large quantities it can. His attitude towards those with low wolf rankings started to change, and by the time he had taken over as alpha at twenty-one, he was a cruel and unfair leader. He made a new pack rule encouraging the use of slaves, and he treated women as second-class citizens.

Grayson had stopped training for omega-ranked wolves and took away the right for female wolves to train also. Things had changed so much over the past few years at the Blood Moon pack that I could hardly recognise it. I tried to approach Grayson a number of times as his friend and as his Beta, but every time I only enraged him further, and he dismissed my concerns. One day, I decided that I'd had enough, and I spoke with his father, the previous alpha, although he was too fearful at what his son had become to take a stand. So I was alone in my crusade.

To make matters worse, our previous alpha informed Grayson of our chat. Grayson was enraged and confronted me. We had a huge ght. Because I had trained so hard alongside Grayson for many years, my strength almost matched his, but not quite. I was severely wounded, and then banished from the pack. I had twenty minutes to get off Blood Moon territory before I was killed. I moved as fast as I could in my wounded condition and was chased for miles. I sought refuge in a remote forest canopy for the night and then stumbled onwards for a few more miles until I unfortunately wandered into Evergreen pack territory. I was outnumbered by the pack warriors and dragged to the dungeons where I remain today. I have been here several days and I have yet to have an audience with the alpha. Although knowing what I know about him now, I am not looking forward to it. I think my chances of getting out of here are not that high. Especially considering his Luna is imprisoned down here also.

I can't understand what kind of wolf could do that to his fated mate. And not just any fated mate. Aleksa is the pack Luna.

Aleksa is beautiful, not just on the outside but on the inside too. Aleksa is kind and strong. She would not compromise her principles for anything or anyone. I respect her integrity and resolve. After speaking with her and Kaia (another imprisoned rogue I have met since coming here) over the past few days, I have come to feel a connection to them. I feel this overwhelming need to protect them both. I want nothing more than to escape these cells and help Aleksa escape with her twins, to get her away from that so-called mate of hers. I also want to help Kaia get out of here. Her fated mate is the top warrior of the pack she has escaped from, is currently searching for her, and she needs to keep moving too. I won't stop until these two she-wolves are safe, as well as the pups Liam and Layla. Maybe then we can all start afresh.

After speaking with Aleksa, she invited us to join her in Colorado. I have never been there but I hear it's a nice place to live. And I am looking forward to putting as much distance between myself and my former pack as possible. Only a few more hours to go and we can escape from this place.

\*Kaia POV\*

I am twenty years of age, tall with a slender build. I have long mousy brown hair, and a light tan on my skin. I am the fated mate of Ezra Anderson, who is the top warrior for the Midnight Pack. I was born a Beta's daughter. My parents were the Beta male and female of our pack, and my brother was to take over as Beta when my father retired. I trained hard alongside my parents and brother. Although I was never to become a Beta, I insisted on being trained regardless. I had decided that I wanted to become a warrior, so I trained every day, twice a day.

The day I was to undertake my nal exams and assessment, I discovered my mate. It was none other than the pack's top warrior, Ezra. We had grown up together and I had no idea that he was to be my fated mate, not until my 20th birthday. Most wolves nd their mates at 19, but it appeared I was a late bloomer. To be honest, I was worried my time would never come. The day I walked into the training grounds and my wolf screamed "Mate", I realized that my life would never be the same again. They say that the moment you meet your mate is the best moment of your life. They say it's love or lust at rst sight, that the sparks and tingles take over and the mate bond comes over. Well, sure my body wanted Ezra, but my mind did not. I just didn't see Ezra that way. He had always been more like a brother to me.

My body had other plans, however, and we mated and marked each other. It was not long after that I realized that he was not being faithful to me, the pain would come throughout the day and he didn't hide the fact that he slept with any she-wolf that walked past. I confronted Ezra and that was the rst time he hit me. I fought back, but he was always stronger than me.

I had decided I wasn't going to stick around and be treated like that, so I made plans to escape one morning and left the pack. I rejected the pack and I rejected my mate. I was still greatly suffering the effects of rejecting our bond and I felt so weak. So much so that I was picked up along the border of the Evergreen pack and ended up in these cells.

Since being here I have met Aleksa, who is currently in a similar position to mine. She is stuck in a mateship where she is being abused and treated unfairly, and is planning to ee. We have decided to join forces and take back our lives. We are kindred spirits and I believe we need to stick together.

Mason, another wolf that has been imprisoned here at Evergreen pack, is going to come along with us. I still feel so weakened because of the rejection. However, I'm also feeling hopeful that things might improve really soon. Today we are planning to escape, and I can't wait to nally be free. I needed to get as far away from Ezra as possible. And far away from this pack. Only a few more hours to go.