

Luna Aleksa's Escape Chapter 16

Aleksa POV

I put on some cherry red lip gloss and rubbed my lips together, plumping my lips to give them that glossy full lip look. I took one last look in the mirror, said my little mantra to myself "you've got this girl" and walked into the lounge. I grabbed the keys off the table and said goodbye to Mason and Kaia, who were watching the late news on television.

I was feeling pumped and ready to start my first shift at the tavern. This would be the first day of the rest of my life, of our lives. This was for the twins as much as it was for me. Financial independence was part of our journey. I needed to be able to provide for them, to give them the life they deserved, I thought to myself.

I walked out the door and made my way towards the stairs. It was at that moment that I had the strangest feeling as I walked in complete darkness towards the car. It felt like I wasn't alone. I don't know if I was on guard because Lachlan was probably still looking for us, or if it was my heightened senses warning me that someone was close by.

I shrugged it off and sat in the driver's seat. Here goes nothing, I thought to myself. I pulled out of the driveway and made my way down the gravel road. I had left extra early as I wanted to make a good impression.

I put the radio on and listened to some music; Cold Heart by Elton John and Dua Lipa. I love this song, I think to myself. I turn the volume up high. Dancing from my car seat while driving through the darkness.

In no time I arrived at work. Gosh, time goes fast when you are having fun. I miss cranking the music up and dancing around the house. I hadn't done that since before I met Lachlan. Life had gotten serious so fast. Anyway, no time to dwell on the past. I was walking into my future.

I walked up to the entrance, and looked at the security guard. "Hi, you must be Tony", I said in a loud voice, because the music was pumping in the tavern.

"I am, and who would you be?" He looked at me suspiciously.

"I am Aleksa, tonight is my first night. I'll be working at a bar. Sierra hired me today" I said enthusiastically.

“Welcome to the tavern Aleksa, please go inside.” Tony said to me, pulling the red velvet rope across for me to pass.

I walked past Tony and stopped just before I entered. I take a moment to center myself. I hear that mantra in my mind once again. Then I pulled the door open and stepped into the tavern.

I am taken aback by how many people are currently here. The place is packed. The lights are dimmed. The music is cranking. There is even a dance floor in the far corner on the left-hand side of the bar.

Sierra wasn't joking when she said we would get slammed tonight. I feel fear overtake me. Can I do this? What was I thinking? I have no experience. As I start to delve into self-doubt, I am snapped out of my thoughts when a familiar voice speaks to me.

“Well hello again, uh I didn't catch your name last time we met?” the unknown voice says. I moved to stand in the light and then I recognized the person standing right in front of me. It's Asher, the park ranger we met the other day.

“Oh hi, it's nice to see you again, I'm Aleksa.” I said politely.

“Nice to see you again Aleksa, hey uh, what was your friend's name? I forgot to ask the other day”, He asks with a shy smile on his face.

“Oh, Kaia, her name is Kaia.” I said back to him.

“Kaia – nice,” he says deep in thought.

“Well, I better get moving, it's my first shift and I don't want to be late” I said to him.

“Yeah, sure,uh, good luck” Asher says, still preoccupied with his thoughts.

I pushed past him and walked up to the bar. I couldn't see Sierra anywhere and the girl at the bar looked super busy, so I walked around to the back of the bar, thinking there would be an office somewhere out back where I might find Sierra.

What a night. I thought to myself. I found Sierra in her office earlier and she gave me a crash course on the most popular drinks that are ordered at the tavern. Fortunately, it appears that most people prefer beer.

I managed to make it through the night without making any major mistakes and even started to learn a regular's name or two.

The other girl working at the bar, Accalia, didn't talk much, or even look at me most of the night, but I'm thinking that might possibly be her personality type.

She has that whole alternative vibe going with purple highlights on her black hair, she has pale white skin as if it were kissed by the moon. She has thick glossy lips. And her eyes, her eyes are so dark but captivating at the same time. I can't actually make out their color. She was wearing black leather pants and a skin-tight leather vest, with chunky leather and studded bracelets on her wrists.

She looks like the kinda girl you don't want to mess with. She's great with the customers though. They all love her. I would imagine she has been here for quite some time.

I finished wiping the last table and looked up at the clock. It's three am. Time went by so fast. My feet are aching, it's been a while since I spent so long on my feet and I didn't wear the most comfortable shoes, so I will be paying for that later today.

I said goodbye to everyone and walked towards the car. I rubbed my eyes as I turned on the engine and started to make my way back home.

It's so quiet at this time of the morning and there is no one else on the road. As I pulled into the gravel road that would lead me back to the old log cabin, I saw a black shadow go past the side window.

I rubbed my eyes again and slowed down a bit and glanced to my right side. I can't see anything or anyone so I guess my eyes are playing tricks on me since I am so tired. I am feeling a little weary though, so I push my foot down on the accelerator and drive home a bit faster.

When I got home, I saw that Mason and Kaia had left the porch light on for me, thankfully. As my mind is taking me to a strange place today. I feel anxious for some reason. As I turned off the engine, I started to walk at pace to the front door. As I pulled out my keys, I turned back and looked at the lake

and then again at the forested area. Nope Aleksa, there's no one there. It's just your overactive imagination.

I opened the door and walked into the house and kicked off my boots that I wish I hadn't worn tonight. I locked the door and headed towards my bed with a smile on my face. I did it. I survived my first night at work.

I woke up to the warm sun streaming in through the windows. I must have fallen straight into a deep sleep because I felt well rested. I looked up at the old alarm clock next to me. Uh oh. It's 10am. No wonder I feel well rested – I've overslept. I was supposed to have Liam and Layla at daycare already. I looked at the twins. They looked so peaceful. I didn't want to wake them just yet.

I bit down on my lip and sighed. Oh well. I might just make a sneaky coffee and enjoy a bit of peace and quiet before the twins wake up. I started to look for the phone so that I could call the daycare and let them know that the twins would be staying home today.

Once that was done, I put some water in the jug and waited for the water to boil. Coffee is what I need right now. I thought back to when I bumped into Asher last night. He seemed quite interested in Kaia. I must remember to tell her about that. He's very sweet and I think they would look so cute together. With what she has been through, she deserves a little fun.

The house was so quiet right now, with the twins still asleep and with Mason and Kaia at work already. It was nice of them to let me sleep in, I thought to myself. I'm glad they didn't wake me this morning, it will be nice to have a day to just enjoy Liam and Layla's company.

The jug had boiled and I was making my coffee when I heard a noise at the door. My heart started to race and my breathing quickened. A feeling of terror took over me. I heard a loud knock at the door. I just stood in the kitchen not moving, hoping the knocking would stop and whoever it was would think no one was home and go away.

I had nowhere to run. I would never be able to get out of here in time. The twins were still sleeping. I had to face up to this. Whoever it was. Whatever it was. I had to be brave. I could face whatever life threw at me. I wasn't the same Aleksa I was a couple of months ago, I told myself.

I took a deep breath and I slowly opened the door. And I was utterly shocked by the man who stood in front of me. What is it with this log cabin and gorgeous strangers appearing at our door? I just hoped this gorgeous specimen of a man had good intentions and wasn't one of Lachlan's lacheys.

"Good Morning, you must be Aleksa?" the handsome stranger said to me with a breathtaking smile.

Aleksa POV

I stood there in shock, wondering how this handsome stranger knew my name. I took a deep breath and I was immediately alarmed. He is a werewolf and, judging by the aura and scent he is exuding, one of power, I assume, probably an alpha. I take a moment to compose myself although I am overcome with fear.

So many questions are swirling around in my head at this moment. Has he been sent by Lachlan? Is he here to hurt me? Does he know we are rogues? Are we encroaching on his territory? What does he want from me? Is he here for my pups?

At that moment, the stranger in front of me starts to clear his throat, pulling me out of my own thoughts. He stands there with a questionable look on his face as if he is trying to figure me out. He must sense my fear, I thought to myself.

"I believe you have met my Beta Asher", he says with a smirk on his face. I looked at him, with utter realization, smashing into me. He is the alpha. We must be on his territory.

"Uh, yes, uh, we don't mean any harm. We didn't come into your territory intentionally. We didn't know. We can leave right away! Please, we don't want any trouble." I said, panicked in a pleading tone.

The penalty for rogues entering pack lands is generally death or imprisonment. I started to panic and hyperventilate, looking at the wolf in front of me with sheer desperation and fear. I must protect my pups, I think to myself.

Clearly sensing my fear and panic, the alpha in front of me raises his hand towards me. "It's OK. Don't panic. I'm not here to hurt you, I just want to have a chat with you. Would you invite me in?" he politely asks me.

I took a deep breath and tried to calm myself down. I opened the door further to allow him to walk past. He slowly walks past me and sits on the couch, placing his arms on the top and side of the couch, sitting with his back against the corner of the couch, and placing his right leg over his left, looking relaxed. I just stood there dumbfounded, wondering what was to come next.

“Please, Aleksa, take a seat. This is just a friendly chat. I just want to know why you are here, on my pack lands. You don’t smell like rogues, but here you are out here on your own. Please explain yourself.” He says to me with a serious look on his gorgeous face.

I slowly sit on a chair next to the couch, sitting towards the edge of the chair. And I think to myself, and wonder how much I should tell him. I decide to go with the light version of events, skimming past the fact that I am Luna of a pack, and that my fated mate is currently hunting me and my rogue friends down.

“Start at the beginning, Aleksa, tell me. Is that even your real name?” He asks suspiciously.

I cleared my throat. “Yes, Aleksa is my real name. I guess I will start at the beginning then. I met my mate about two years ago. Everything seemed perfect. We had pups pretty much as soon as we met, twins actually.

“How old are you?” He asks me, interrupting my story.

“I’m twenty years old” I said to him. Wondering why he would ask that question. But I continue on telling my story to him.

“Pretty much as soon as I got pregnant I started experiencing intense pain, daily. I would see the pack doctor often, and she would put it down to growing pregnancy pains, and even when they continued after the twins had arrived she put it down to a traumatic delivery and said they would eventually disappear.”

“Well they didn’t, it wasn’t until one day when I had to leave work early because I couldn’t bear the pain that I walked in on my beta- uh- best friend and my mate in our bed together.”

“Long story short, although I planned to escape with my babies, my plan was cut short and I was thrown in the dungeons, until I escaped with the help of some friends, and we made it here.”

“Please, we have no intention of causing any trouble, we didn’t even realize we were on pack land. We can leave today, please don’t harm us” I pleaded, tears falling down the sides of my face.

I can’t read his face. I don’t know what his plans are. I am praying for mercy from the moon goddess, if just this once, things could go our way.

He took a breath. “I am sorry you had to go through all that. I can’t imagine why a mate would betray their bond given to them from the moon goddess. That is sacrilege.”

“Where are your pups and your friends now?” He asks.

“My friends Mason and Kaia are at work at the moment. They got jobs at a club in town. Uh Headquarters.” I told him.

“And the twins, well, they’re safe, they’re sleeping right now” I said.

“How old are your pups, and what are their names?” He asked me.

“Liam and Layla, they are two years old.” I said, biting down on my bottom lip, wondering what he would do with this information.

“You aren’t technically on park land, you are on the outskirts. I will allow this for now. But we will be keeping an eye on you. We will need to verify that you are who you say you are.” He warned me.

“Which pack are you from?” He asked me. His eyes rested on my face.

I don’t know what to say. If I tell him which pack we are from, he might contact Lachlan. He would tell him something different to what I have, and we would be imprisoned again for Lachlan to find us. I can’t tell him.

“It’s okay. We will leave today. Please, we don’t want any trouble. We just want to be left to ourselves,” I said defiantly.

“You will tell me which pack you are from now!” He says in a loud alpha command.

I cannot refuse a command, so I proceeded to tell him “Evergreen Pack”, “We are from the Evergreen Pack on the East Coast”. I say sadly.

“Evergreen, you say. You are missing Luna, are you not?” He questions me with amber flecks sparkling in his eye.

I looked at him with a tear-stained face. I say nothing but my face deceives me.

“Alpha Lachlan said you were kidnapped by rogues. Tell me Aleksa, have you been kidnapped?” He asks me with a curious look on his face.

“No! No I haven’t. Mason and Kaia are my friends. They helped us escape. Please, Mason and Kaia have nothing to do with this. Please don’t punish them. This is all my fault!!” I pleaded with him to spare my friends.

“I believe you, but I think you had better explain things to me more truthfully this time, Aleksa, and don’t lie to me. I am not here to harm you. I want to help you.” He says in a soft tone, and for some reason I find that comfortable and I believe him.

We talk for some time. I fill him in on how I came to meet Mason and Kaia, as well as explaining how they came to be in the dungeons. I explained how we escaped and the events leading up to us arriving here. I explained how Lachlan treated me, and about his plans to make Eva his Luna, and me his mistress. As well as his plans for our pups. He sat there and listened intently to my words.

Although I couldn’t read him and had no idea what his train of thought might be, I also felt safe around him. I finished my story and sat there in silence waiting for him to respond.

Some time passed, as well as an awkward silence, and it felt like time was moving ever so slowly, then he spoke.

“I am sorry Aleksa. I am sorry that the moon goddess fated you with such a mate. Mates are supposed to be sacred, and if what you say is true then Lachlan has made a mockery of the sanctity of the mate bond. I will look into your account of events. If what you are saying is true then we will grant you the ability to live here on the pack border for now” He said to me.

“I will need to meet Mason and Kaia, as well as verifying their version of events”. He proclaims.

“I understand. Do you want me to call them for you?” I ask him.

“There’s no need for that. I will go into Headquarters and speak with them there.” He says.

“But, they are working, and there are humans around, are you sure you want to do that?” I ask.

“I think it will be fine. Especially considering I own that bar. In fact I own almost the entire town.” He says with a smirk on his face.

I look at him in shock. That means he probably owns the Tavern, where I work. That means that this isn’t a human town after all. We had really messed up here. Of all the places.

“It was nice meeting you Aleksa. I will be in touch.” He says standing up from the couch.

“Uh, it was nice to meet you too, uh, I just realized that I don’t actually know your name?” I say to him realizing that he never introduced himself.

“Kingston, it’s Kingston.” He says with a cheeky grin on his face.

Kingston, I think to myself, for some reason hearing his name makes my heart happy. I feel warm all over. It’s at this point I realize I have been staring at his face a little longer than I should have. He just grins at me.

“Thank you Kingston, I appreciate you considering this. I promise we won’t be a nuisance.” I say to him gratefully.

He turns and walks off. I shut the door. Then not a minute later I hear little feet running down the hallway.

“Mommy! Mommy!” Liam and Layla yell at me happily. “Pancakes Mommy!” They yell in unison with great big smiles on their faces, as I pick them up for cuddles. I then place them on the bench top in front of the kitchen window so that they can help me make the pancake batter.

They position themselves front facing towards the window. “Wolf mama, wolf!” They yell, and we watch a huge black wolf run into the forest.

Kingston. I think to myself. His wolf is magnificent. His human seems to be quite alluring to. I scold myself for thinking of him that way in a time like this. I

need to be practical and think clearly. I can't allow myself these thoughts. "But he's so gorgeous Aleksa!" I hear Amber say and giggle in my head.

I haven't heard anything from Amber since we were thrown in the dungeons. I wondered if she would ever speak to me again. "Ofcourse Aleksa, I am always here I just needed some time to heal. We can trust him Aleksa." Amber says. "How do you know that?" I ask Amber. "Trust me, Aleksa. All will be revealed in due time". She says to me cryptically.

Kingston POV

I am twenty eight years of age and I am the Alpha of the Rocky Mountain National Park Pack. We are the second largest pack in the country. I took over as Alpha from my father when I turned twenty two. I met my mate not long after becoming Alpha and we were happy for a while. Until she got sick. After a short battle with a terminal illness, she passed away. We didn't get the chance to have pups, we had planned to enjoy our time together for a while before settling down to have pups, unfortunately fate had other plans for us.

For the past few years I have managed to dodge the council's plans for me. There has been huge pressure from the werewolf council for me to take a chosen mate as the pack's Luna, but I have no inclination to.

My sister Quinn takes care of most of the luna duties for our pack, and my mother supports her with this for now. I realize she can't do this forever, as she is yet to meet her mate too. Although, I have a bit of time before I need to figure out what happens next. Quinn is a bit younger than me, she's only twenty two.

Usually, you meet your mate when you gain your wolf at around eighteen years of age. So Quinn is feeling the pressure of not having met her mate. She has faith that he is still out there though, so she's just biding her time until she finds him.

With no heir to take over as Alpha, I will most likely have to pass it down to my Beta or his offspring. Although, I have no plans of relinquishing my role as Alpha any time soon.

Being that we are such a large pack and that we have a well respected and feared reputation, we are for the most part a warrior pack. So we almost never have any trouble here, other than the occasional rogue.

But that doesn't mean we are complacent. Everyone in our pack is required to train from three years of age, regardless of gender. We pride ourselves in knowing that everyone can fight to defend themselves, especially our most vulnerable wolves.

Right now I am busy organizing the Annual Royal Pack Summit which is taking place here at Rocky Mountain in the summertime. It's a big deal, alpha's from all around the country come to pay their respects and allegiance to the Royal Werewolf family, as well as network, and party. Since we have been tasked with hosting this year, there is a lot to do to ensure it all goes smoothly.

I have a committee of volunteers that are organizing most of it, but there are a number of packs that aren't on good terms and it is my duty to ensure that no hostility presents itself. So I am ringing each and every pack in the country to personally welcome them and get an idea of what we are dealing with when the time comes. We need to be able to separate rival packs to avoid any disturbances, and ensure it all goes smoothly.

I am on the phone in my office making calls to packs on the East Coast, when my Beta Asher comes into my office. I rub my forehead and look up at him sighing. I put my hand up and point a finger at him to gesture that I will just be a minute, and I continue on with the phone call I'm on.

I'm currently speaking with the alpha of the Evergreen Pack. He's a real piece of work, this guy, he's giving me some convoluted story about his Luna and pups were kidnapped by rogues. Apparently he sent an email, but I've yet to receive it.

I tell him I haven't seen or heard anything that would be helpful to him, and give him my offer of assistance should he ever need it. I agree to put up some fliers, and keep an eye out for anything suspicious. After some small talk I ended my call with him.

For some reason that phone call irks me. I feel disdain for this man. He sounded ingenuine and I believe there is more to this story than he is letting on. I have no idea why I feel this way but it's just a feeling I have.

Asher starts rattling on about some humans staying at the old log cabin, well he assumes they are human, but isn't overly convinced, so he's going to dig a little deeper and keep a close eye on them. I'm too busy to deal with this right now, so I agree with him and fob him off for now. I feel like a little guilty, but

I'm under so much pressure right now, and I'm sure it's nothing he can't handle.

While he was telling me about them I felt my wolf stirring inside me. Maybe he's been stuck indoors too long and he wants to get out of this office and go for a run. I look up at the clock. I've put in a few good hours so far, so I decide that I'll take an early lunch break and get back to this a bit later.

I walk out of the pack house and jog down the stairs. I look around from one side of the pack grounds to another. It's pretty quiet this morning, most wolves are at school or work or training at this time of day. I rip my clothes off and start shifting and run into the woods.

My bones start to c***k out of place and extend then slowly fall back into place, fur sprouts out all over my hands and arms and body. I start to pound into the forest floor feeling the crisp air hit my snout. This release is exactly what I needed right now. A break from the mundane office work and never ending pack calls. Just me and Sabre and the great outdoors.

Sabre takes over and he runs in a specific direction. He runs to the far right side of the woods, and he starts running alongside the Falls River. Before long we are approaching the area that Asher was talking about this morning. If only I could remember what he was saying earlier, my curiosity has piqued.

We have reached the old log cabin and there aren't any cars outside, perhaps no one is home we ponder. We take a few deep sniffs and we are intrigued by one of the scents we pick up. So we start moving towards the front window. A few yards in we stop in our tracks. From where we are standing we can see the most beautiful woman.

She's gorgeous with long thick darkest brown hair, crystal blue eyes, perfectly plump pink lips and snow white skin. She looks like she is deep in thought. We wonder if this is one of the humans Asher was telling us about. We will have to find him and ask him for more information when I get back. For now I just watch her for a while discretely from behind a great old oak tree.

We watch for a while, then we turn back into the forest determined to find out more about the mysterious woman at the old log cabin.

I feel restless tonight. I can't stop thinking about the beauty I saw at the old log cabin. I decided to take Sabre for a late night run in the dark. We are running for hours when we decide that we've had enough and start making our way back to the woods. We are weaving in and out of the trees when we catch the faintest whiff of the scent we picked up at the old log cabin.

Sabre decides that we need to investigate. We are in the middle of nowhere running alongside a dusty old gravel road when we hear a car. We can hear music playing, it sounds like cold heart. I know that song everywhere it's been played over and over again on almost every radio throughout the country.

We pick up our pace to match the car, glancing to our right side, we can make out that long dark hair flowing in the wind. It's her! At that moment she catches us with her eyes and turns to look at us, so we pick up the pace even further and boost past the car.

We make it back to the Falls River just before she does, and we watch her exit the car, from the shelter of the old oak tree. We watch as she makes her way to the front door, watching her slowly look back at the river and then amongst the trees we are standing in. She then turns and walks into the house. Once we are happy that she has made it safely inside, we turn back towards the woods and make our way back to the packhouse.

Sabre and myself are both pent up full of energy this morning. We have woken up at the c***k of dawn and we plan to meet the mysterious beauty that is currently dominating our thoughts.

We managed to find out from Asher that the woman in question was Aleksa, Correct me if i'm wrong but Aleksa translated means "defender", that's a pretty impressive name. According to Asher, she has two children.

Mason and Kaia I was able to identify from their security swipe card photos, as they are working at one of my clubs in town. Asher says they are already settling in, and making friends, and although he can't scent anything specific, he still feels all is not as it seems with them.

After jumping in the shower, I head to the packhouse kitchen for a light breakfast. Then I shift into my wolf form and dash off into the woods. I take a change of clothes with me to change into once I reach the edge of the forest where the old log cabin is.

In no time, I am outside the cabin, walking up the porch stairs and knocking on the door. After a few moments the door opens and I am face to face with Aleksa.

The first thing I notice is that her scent is even stronger, she's a werewolf! She smells delicious – like peony blossom and peach nectar. My senses are overwhelmed.

I wonder how Asher could have missed this. Her scent is doing all sorts of things to me right now. For some reason I find myself wildly attracted to her, and it is taking all my willpower to not act on these feelings right now.

I can sense her fear radiating from her, it's practically palpable. I can smell the perspiration building on her forehead. At this moment she appears to be lost in her thoughts, so I clear my throat to get her attention back. I start by making small talk, but I won't beat around the bush. I need some answers and I need them now.

She starts to plead with me. It was not my intention to scare her, I try to relax her and tell her that I mean her no harm. I just have a few questions to ask her.

I ask her to explain herself, and she starts to tell me about what happened in her pack with her fated mate, and how she had to flee the pack to get away from his cruel ways, as well as protecting her children. I am repressing my growls, as I don't want to scare her any further. But I am beyond pissed off, how someone could treat their goddess given mate that way was beyond me.

She explains how Mason and Kaia were rogues but through no fault of their own, it would appear they found themselves in positions similar to that of Aleksa and they formed a bond together. I would need to do some investigation to make sure their stories checked out, although I can't imagine they would have much to gain by lying to me, they seem genuine.

I ask her which pack she is from and she starts to panic. She is reluctant to give me this information, and I am struggling to keep my cool. I don't mean to but before I realize what I have done I have alpha commanded her to tell me. So she does.

I am not surprised when she tells me she is from the Evergreen pack. As she was telling me her story I started to link it to what I had heard from Alpha Lachlan on our phone call the other day.

I am not surprised she is Luna. She is beautiful and strong and she has a kind and caring aura about her. But I need to verify this story. People have a tendency to lie when they are scared or desperate. And she is clearly very scared. I don't think she is lying though. I sense she is being truthful.

We talk some more, I advise her that I will be having a conversation with both Mason and Kaia separately, she doesn't seem concerned, she even offers to help organize the meeting, although I explain it is not necessary as I will be seeing them at the club.

Before I leave she asks for my name. I was so wrapped up in asking her questions, I didn't even introduce myself. She stares at me for a few moments and I can't quite figure out what she's thinking as she stares at me with a sweet smile on her face. Then as if she realizes that she is staring at me she thanks me for my visit and farewells me closing the door.

As I am walking down the stairs I hear two little voices calling out to their mommy, with my werewolf hearing. The twins must be awake I think to myself. I really want to meet them for some reason, as does Sabre. But we resist the urge. Once I get to the tree line, I shift into my wolf, seeing that the twins are watching from the window. Sabre and I leap off following the forest path, feeling quite happy with myself and thinking about that sweet scent of peony blossom and peach nectar.

Aleksa POV

It's been a week since Kingston appeared at my doorstep, and I haven't seen him since that day. We are all settled into life in Denver, having been here a couple of weeks now. Liam and Layla are loving the daycare that they attend. The ladies who run it, and work there, are so kind and nurturing, the twins are really thriving there. They've even managed to make a few friends and have a few playdates. I've even made a few mom friends myself. We go for coffee on the weekend while the children play at the park. It's a far cry from our life at Evergreen, which was so much more isolated. I didn't have any mom friends. I mean I only had Eva and Kali, and look how Eva turned out. Kali is a keeper though, I sure miss her. I think of her often.

Mason and Kaia are enjoying working at the club, naturally they have already been promoted since starting there. Their natural leadership skills are obviously hard to ignore. Mason is now running the security team there, and has been asked to manage security for another two clubs in town. Kaia is no longer working as hostess, she is working within management. They both

seem happy. We didn't talk much about our lives before we came here, we all decided we wanted to move forward and focus on our new lives. We didn't want the negativity of our pasts constantly hanging over us.

Recently we heard from Caleb and Kali, they had finally safely reached Crimson Moon and were greeted with open arms by Alpha Callum and his Luna Cadence. They had to lay low for a while in a human town initially as they were surrounded by the Evergreen pack warriors, but they managed to escape a week later. It sounded like things were pretty tough for them for a while. I am so happy that they are safe now. I still feel guilty that their lives were uprooted the way they were. However, they assure me that they would do it again in a heartbeat. I'm grateful for such loyal and courageous friends.

Every day I count myself lucky that Lachlan hasn't found me or the twins, or my friends yet. We have no way of knowing where he is looking for us, although I imagine he would be looking high and low for Liam, being that he is the rightful heir to Evergreen Pack. I know the day will come when he finds us and we will have to fight for our freedom once again. All I can do right now is make sure we are ready when that time comes. Mason, Kaia and I have been working on multiple escape plans for the twins and I, and we are almost ready for when the time comes.

Today I have the day off work. I have dropped the twins off at daycare, and Mason and Kaia are both at work, so I don't know what to do with myself. I've been working a lot recently. Since we left Evergreen in such a hurry, we were unprepared. We had no savings or back up plans, so I've been working extra shifts so that I can put some money inside for when we have to move on again.

I look around at the cabin, it's pretty immaculate so that rules cleaning out. I look in the pantry and it's looking a little empty so I guess I can go grocery shopping. Although I am feeling restless at the moment, so, I try to channel Amber to see if she would like to go for a run.

After a few attempts I hear no reply from her in my head, so I guess shifting is out of the question right now. I almost can't remember the last time we shifted. Amber has been so distant since everything that went down with Lachlan, I think she misses Cyrus, Lachlan's wolf. She has only spoken to me once since we escaped from Evergreen, and that was when we met Kingston.

A cheeky smile erupts on my face when I think of Kingston. Gosh he is divine. He's tall, he's tanned, he's muscular, he has a smile that just makes me want

to melt. He has a commanding no nonsense type of aura about him. But then he's understanding and seems sincere. I feel so attracted to him. It's so unlike me. I'm not that girl that falls all over a guy. It's so bizarre, I should be mourning the death of my relationship with Lachlan, not getting all turned on but the hot alpha of the Rocky Mountain Pack. Get a grip Aleksa – I think to myself.

I figured that because I had rejected my fated mate I would be sick. I had always been told that rejecting or being rejected by your fated mate would make you weak and potentially k**l you, but I wasn't feeling any of that. In all honesty, I had never felt better. Maybe a little weak physically, but mentally I feel freer than I ever have.

I can't even feel Lachlan being intimate with someone anymore. Perhaps my rejecting our bond was enough? I thought that he needed to accept my rejection though. It's so confusing. Perhaps I needed to see someone, a witch or a healer or perhaps a shaman. I wouldn't even know where to start come to think of it. Perhaps I would discuss this with Kaia later on tonight and see what she thinks about it all.

Thinking about Kingston had gotten me all wound up. So I decided I would go for a run, and since Amber isn't talking to me I will just go in my human form. I look around my room to find something acceptable to run in.

I picked up some black leggings and a black sports bra and put them on. I grab the only pair of shoes I have that would be suitable, my black converse shoes, and pull my hair into a high ponytail.

I walk through the house, shut the door, run down the stairs and start stretching. I take a deep breath in of fresh air, and decide that this is exactly what I need. So I started jogging off into the woods to relieve myself of some s****l frustration.

I've been running for about forty five minutes now and I realize I am completely lost. I thought I was following a trail but clearly I went off track at some point. I'm not worried because I am a wolf and I love the woods. So I try to communicate with Amber but she's still not reachable. I slow down to walk a bit and take a look at my surroundings. If I could just find some sort of landmark, or listen for some sort of sound like running water or traffic or something.

I didn't bring anything with me so I can't keep track of the time. Although I don't have to pick up Liam and Layla until much later today so that doesn't concern me.

I start to backtrack hoping that I am going back in the right direction. After a few hours I stop. Great one Aleksa. Lost in the middle of nowhere, with no wolf to rely on. My stomach starts to growl and I wish that I had some breakfast before I left, or even a drink of water.

I decide that I will keep walking straight until I find the river or the road, or something resembling the right direction.

After some time passes, I get the feeling I am not alone. I can't hear anything but I can sense company is near.

I start regretting this bright idea I had to go for a run in the woods without my wolf. I hear a twig snap and I look behind me. I can smell them before I see them. Rogues. There appears to be two of them. They start to snarl at me. They both look pretty mangey, and they smell terrible like rotten meat. I would imagine it has been a while since they last showered. I am fighting the urge to vomit right now. My gag reflex is going strong. They slowly start to stalk towards me, both coming towards me, one from the right and one from the left.

I start to panic and try to wake Amber up, "Come on girl I could really use your help right now, we need to shift. Amber!!! Please! Rogues! I need to shift." I yell at her desperately in my head.

"What's a pretty she wolf doing out here all on her lonesome?" The brown one with white stripes all around its torso says to me.

"Looking for some fun, shewolf?" The other rogue says licking it's licks and smirking at me, it is also brown, with red stripes over it's back and belly.

"Uh, no thank you. I was just on my way back to.. My pack." I say.

"Liar. You have no pack. You don't smell like a rogue." he sniffs the air near me. "You smell so sweet, and I can sense that you are ranked, but you don't smell like a pack wolf". The brown and white coloured rogue says matter of factly.

“That’s right so you better back off – NOW!” I say. Hoping that will make them think twice, but deep down inside knowing that it won’t. I am well aware that I am outnumbered and out wolfed.

“Hahaha. Nice try, she wolf. You are weak. Your wolf is not with you right now!” the brown and white rogue says with a sinister smile on it’s face.

I take a defensive stance, as I am well aware that these rogues want more than a chat from me, and I am resigned to the fact that I will have to defend myself in human form.

I only wish I was trained to defend myself. I never got a chance to train at Evergreen because I had gotten pregnant straight away and then I was constantly weak from the pain of Lachlan cheating. I had done a few self defense classes back in the human town I grew up in before meeting Lachlan but that was about it. Moon goddess please protect me! I prayed silently.

The brown and white coloured rogue lunged towards me, and I was able to move out of his way just in time, only to be pounced on by the brown and red striped rogue. He furiously bit into the side of my waist, taking a chunk of skin out of my side. I could feel the excruciating, stabbing pain take over my body. “Aahhhhh!” I screamed in pain and shock. I could smell the overwhelming metallic odor of my blood oozing out of me.

At that moment, the brown and white striped rogue got back up on it’s feet, and plunged towards me as I stood up. He knocked me hard onto the ground. I tried to push him off me but he had me pinned to the ground, and I was feeling weak from the bite on my waist. He started to snap at my neck, going for my jugular. I felt an unimaginable fear inside me at that moment. Was this it? Is this how I would die? No f#\$%ing way! I will fight to my last breath for my pups, I tell myself.

I punched the rogue in the throat as hard as I could, and used all my strength to push the rogue to the side, it started to choke, and took a moment to get it’s breath back then got ready to charge me again. The other rogue was circling me with a feral and satisfied look on it’s face.

I clutched at my side trying to place pressure on my wound. I could feel that I was losing too much blood. I started to feel dizzy. I could see the rogues smirking and mumbling something. I saw the red and white one lunge towards me, and just as it was opening its mouth to snap its teeth at my neck, I started to fall to the ground, and all I saw was darkness.

Aleksa POV

I woke up to the sound of machines beeping. I took a few deep breaths and I could smell bleach mixed with antiseptic. Where am I, I asked myself. I tried to open my eyes and everything felt so bright. And I felt so tired, so I gave up and faded back into sleep.

I could hear a faint voice calling out my name, multiple times. Then I smelt the faint scent of fresh pine, it was my favourite scent, as the forest was my favourite place. I started to open my eyes again and this time even though it was overwhelmingly bright, I succeeded in fully opening them.

I felt slight tingles on my hand, It must be static electricity from the bed and the machines I thought. Then I looked down. It was Kingston. He was holding my hand, sitting beside me, looking at me with what looked like relief on his face. I tried to speak but my mouth was so dry, I managed to croak out "water".

Kingston obliged and helped me with some water in a cup and a straw. I took a few sips initially, then I greedily took more. The thirst within me was intense. I felt like I hadn't had any water in days.

I tried again to speak, this time I was successful, although I had to cough in between words.

"Where am I?" I manage to say in between coughs, looking around confused. As I tried to sit up a bit, I was engulfed with pain, a stabbing pain at my waist. I grabbed it with my hand and I could feel a large dressing. I looked back up at Kingston.

"The rogues? But how did I get here?" I asked.

"I can explain, don't panic, you are safe Aleksa". Kingston reassures me. He then proceeds to tell me how I got here.

"I was out for a run in the woods, when I smelt rogues, I could sense danger, so I kept running until I saw you." Kingston tells me.

"You were bleeding profusely, and the rogues appeared to be going in for the k**l, so I took them both out, and then I rushed you here." He tells me, with anger starting to radiate from his aura.

I look at him, I'm overcome with emotion, I feel so grateful to him, if he hadn't been out there, I would be dead. "Thank you, I don't know how I can ever repay you for this." I say to him with a sincere look upon my face.

Then I realize I am here, but my pups are not, "Oh my goddess, Liam and Layla! Daycare! I was supposed to pick them up. I've got to go!" I say as I try to pull myself up in a hurry leading to my stitches bursting. I feel the blood start to rush out of my wound, the metallic smell overwhelming my senses. What on earth? I think to myself. I am a werewolf. Why have I not healed?

Kingston panics and calls the doctors in to tend to my wound, he holds pressure on it, until they arrive, then they start stitching my wound up again.

"You need to be more careful Aleksa, your wolf is not with you right now, your healing will be that of a human's healing right now". He tells me.

He then goes on to tell me a healer came in earlier and said that my wolf was away, but would be back, that she just needed some time to heal.

"Liam and Layla, are here, at Rocky Mountain. So are Mason and Kaia, you have all been granted an exemption, you are here as my guests. They will be in shortly. I have mindlinked my Beta Asher to inform them that you are awake." He says.

I sigh in relief. I am glad that my pups are close by and that I will get to see them. But I have so many questions. I look up at Kingston and I start to ask him "How long have I been out?".

To which he replied, "Three days. You have been in a coma for the past three days." He says with a sadness exuding from him.

I am shocked "Three days? How can that be? Why did I sleep so long?" I ask, starting to panic that I have worried my pups and friends for the past three days.

"Your wolf wasn't with you to speed up the healing process, and your injuries were critical. But you're awake now and your body is slowly repairing itself" Kingston exclaims.

Kingston looks at me as though there is something on his mind. "Tell me, Aleksa, what were you doing in that part of the forest alone at that time of day?".

I look at him perplexed. "I was going for a run, I got lost, then I came across the rogues". Remembering my encounter with them.

"You really shouldn't be so careless in future, that part of the territory isn't often utilized by our pack, although it is our territory we generally keep away from it. It borders on the forsaken territory." He warns me.

"When you are recovered, we can show you the territorial boundaries, and explain it all a bit more. For now, I would advise you to keep to the main track or even the main road, if you are running in human form" he then pauses, looks at me and continues, "There is something I need to discuss with you but it can wait until you are out of hospital." Kingston says.

At that moment, the door bursts open and Mason and Kaia walk in with two very energetic and happy children "Mommy!" They call to me in sync. "Mommy, we missed you! They tell me. They are about to jump on me when they are pulled back by Mason and Kaia.

"Slow down there pups, we don't want to hurt mommy now do we?" Kaia says to Liam and Layla.

They just look at me wide eyed. "Mommy is so happy to see you both. I have missed you so much while I was sleeping." I tell them with tears ready to fall from my eyes.

We all chat for a while, and Kingston stays sitting next to me the whole time. I find it strange that he seems so protective of me, but at the same time, I really don't want him to leave. Something about his scent keeps me calm and makes me feel safe. Two things I haven't felt in a long time.

After about half an hour I am struggling to keep my eyes open. Mason and Kingston start to notice, and suggest it might be time for everyone to leave so that I can get some sleep. We all say goodbyes and I am able to hug my pups goodbye gently. I thank Mason and Kaia for looking after them and promise I will be out tomorrow, to which Kingston looks at me doubtfully.

They all leave, but Kingston doesn't. "Are you not going to leave as well?" I ask him, struggling to fight against my heavy eyes. "I will wait for you to fall asleep, then I will leave to attend to some pack matters, close your eyes Aleksa, get some sleep" he says.

Then I lose my fight to stay awake and drift off to sleep.

I had been in hospital for a total of five days now, and the medical team were satisfied that I was medically stable, and I was able to leave this morning. To say I was excited was an understatement. I couldn't wait to get out of here, don't get me wrong it was a state of the art hospital, everything was so bright and white and clean, it was a simple room with a bed in the middle of the room connected with monitors and equipment, and a panel above the bed with oxygen and suction and various other switches and medical supplies. Beside me was a small bedside table with a jug of water and cup on it. To the left of me there was a door leading to an ensuite bathroom with a walk in shower and a gorgeous sink and vanity with a large mirror. It was well stocked with environmentally friendly sustainable products.

Everyone here was so professional, from the Nurses and Doctors to the healthcare assistants and kitchen staff that brought me my meals.

The food was first class. I don't think I have ever eaten so well. I mean I have always cooked healthy and tasty meals, it's just you notice it more when someone else is cooking for you and you are on the receiving end.

However, that all said. I missed my pups greatly, I had never been separated from them like this before, with the exception being when Lachlan threw me into the dungeon at Evergreen.

I was also worried that I had missed too many shifts at work, but being that Kingston owned the Tavern, he said he had told Sierra that I would be off for a week or so, so there was no pressure there, but I still felt guilty letting my new team down, especially since I had just recently started.

I just wanted to get back to my new life, which had barely just started. I had told myself that this was just a temporary setback and I wouldn't let it hold me back.

One thing I would definitely miss about being here was the daily visits from Kingston. I could look at his face all day. I felt butterflies just thinking about him. Drool.

I walked to the bathroom to have a quick shower. Mason would be in shortly as he was picking me up to take me back to the old log cabin.

When I walked out of the shower Kingston was waiting at my bedside for me. I was standing at the ensuite door with nothing but a towel on. I stood there shocked. I was not expecting anyone else to be in the room, or I would have changed in the bathroom.

I stood there with my mouth wide open, looking at Kingston, feeling uber anxious that he was seeing me this way.

He was sitting there with a smirk on his face, something flashing in his eyes, amber flecks, his wolf surfacing perhaps.

“I’m sorry I didn’t realize anyone else was in here, I’ll just grab my clothes and change, I won’t be long” I say picking the outfit that had been left for me the other day up off my bed and darting for the bathroom.

Nice one Aleksa, I scold myself. My heart racing and my body responding to the gorgeous wolf sitting only meters away from where I was getting changed.

I quickly throw my black halter neck dress on and my black crossover sandals on and brush my hair in front of the mirror.

Once I feel I look acceptable I walk out of the bathroom to greet Kingston.

“Aleksa, you look beautiful, please sit, there is something I would like to discuss with you” Kingston says sitting on the chair next to my hospital bed, with what looks like l*t in his eyes, trailing my every move.

Luna Aleksa’s Escape Chapter 17

Aleksa POV

I stood there in shock, wondering how this handsome stranger knew my name. I took a deep breath and I was immediately alarmed. He is a werewolf and, judging by the aura and scent he is exuding, one of power, I assume, probably an alpha. I take a moment to compose myself although I am overcome with fear.

So many questions are swirling around in my head at this moment. Has he been sent by Lachlan? Is he here to hurt me? Does he know we are rogues? Are we encroaching on his territory? What does he want from me? Is he here for my pups?

At that moment, the stranger in front of me starts to clear his throat, pulling me out of my own thoughts. He stands there with a questionable look on his face as if he is trying to figure me out. He must sense my fear, I thought to myself.

“I believe you have met my Beta Asher”, he says with a smirk on his face. I looked at him, with utter realization, smashing into me. He is the alpha. We must be on his territory.

“Uh, yes, uh, we don’t mean any harm. We didn’t come into your territory intentionally. We didn’t know. We can leave right away! Please, we don’t want any trouble.” I said, panicked in a pleading tone.

The penalty for rogues entering pack lands is generally death or imprisonment. I started to panic and hyperventilate, looking at the wolf in front of me with sheer desperation and fear. I must protect my pups, I think to myself.

Clearly sensing my fear and panic, the alpha in front of me raises his hand towards me. “It’s OK. Don’t panic. I’m not here to hurt you, I just want to have a chat with you. Would you invite me in?” he politely asks me.

I took a deep breath and tried to calm myself down. I opened the door further to allow him to walk past. He slowly walks past me and sits on the couch, placing his arms on the top and side of the couch, sitting with his back against the corner of the couch, and placing his right leg over his left, looking relaxed. I just stood there dumbfounded, wondering what was to come next.

“Please, Aleksa, take a seat. This is just a friendly chat. I just want to know why you are here, on my pack lands. You don’t smell like rogues, but here you are out here on your own. Please explain yourself.” He says to me with a serious look on his gorgeous face.

I slowly sit on a chair next to the couch, sitting towards the edge of the chair. And I think to myself, and wonder how much I should tell him. I decide to go with the light version of events, skimming past the fact that I am Luna of a pack, and that my fated mate is currently hunting me and my rogue friends down.

“Start at the beginning, Aleksa, tell me. Is that even your real name?” He asks suspiciously.

I cleared my throat. "Yes, Aleksa is my real name. I guess I will start at the beginning then. I met my mate about two years ago. Everything seemed perfect. We had pups pretty much as soon as we met, twins actually.

"How old are you?" He asks me, interrupting my story.

"I'm twenty years old" I said to him. Wondering why he would ask that question. But I continue on telling my story to him.

"Pretty much as soon as I got pregnant I started experiencing intense pain, daily. I would see the pack doctor often, and she would put it down to growing pregnancy pains, and even when they continued after the twins had arrived she put it down to a traumatic delivery and said they would eventually disappear."

"Well they didn't, it wasn't until one day when I had to leave work early because I couldn't bear the pain that I walked in on my beta- uh- best friend and my mate in our bed together."

"Long story short, although I planned to escape with my babies, my plan was cut short and I was thrown in the dungeons, until I escaped with the help of some friends, and we made it here."

"Please, we have no intention of causing any trouble, we didn't even realize we were on pack land. We can leave today, please don't harm us" I pleaded, tears falling down the sides of my face.

I can't read his face. I don't know what his plans are. I am praying for mercy from the moon goddess, if just this once, things could go our way.

He took a breath. "I am sorry you had to go through all that. I can't imagine why a mate would betray their bond given to them from the moon goddess. That is sacrilege."

"Where are your pups and your friends now?" He asks.

"My friends Mason and Kaia are at work at the moment. They got jobs at a club in town. Uh Headquarters." I told him.

"And the twins, well, they're safe, they're sleeping right now" I said.

"How old are your pups, and what are their names?" He asked me.

“Liam and Layla, they are two years old.” I said, biting down on my bottom lip, wondering what he would do with this information.

“You aren’t technically on park land, you are on the outskirts. I will allow this for now. But we will be keeping an eye on you. We will need to verify that you are who you say you are.” He warned me.

“Which pack are you from?” He asked me. His eyes rested on my face.

I don’t know what to say. If I tell him which pack we are from, he might contact Lachlan. He would tell him something different to what I have, and we would be imprisoned again for Lachlan to find us. I can’t tell him.

“It’s okay. We will leave today. Please, we don’t want any trouble. We just want to be left to ourselves,” I said defiantly.

“You will tell me which pack you are from now!” He says in a loud alpha command.

I cannot refuse a command, so I proceeded to tell him “Evergreen Pack”, “We are from the Evergreen Pack on the East Coast”. I say sadly.

“Evergreen, you say. You are missing Luna, are you not?” He questions me with amber flecks sparkling in his eye.

I looked at him with a tear-stained face. I say nothing but my face deceives me.

“Alpha Lachlan said you were kidnapped by rogues. Tell me Aleksa, have you been kidnapped?” He asks me with a curious look on his face.

“No! No I haven’t. Mason and Kaia are my friends. They helped us escape. Please, Mason and Kaia have nothing to do with this. Please don’t punish them. This is all my fault!!” I pleaded with him to spare my friends.

“I believe you, but I think you had better explain things to me more truthfully this time, Aleksa, and don’t lie to me. I am not here to harm you. I want to help you.” He says in a soft tone, and for some reason I find that comfortable and I believe him.

We talk for some time. I fill him in on how I came to meet Mason and Kaia, as well as explaining how they came to be in the dungeons. I explained how we

escaped and the events leading up to us arriving here. I explained how Lachlan treated me, and about his plans to make Eva his Luna, and me his mistress. As well as his plans for our pups. He sat there and listened intently to my words.

Although I couldn't read him and had no idea what his train of thought might be, I also felt safe around him. I finished my story and sat there in silence waiting for him to respond.

Some time passed, as well as an awkward silence, and it felt like time was moving ever so slowly, then he spoke.

"I am sorry Aleksa. I am sorry that the moon goddess fated you with such a mate. Mates are supposed to be sacred, and if what you say is true then Lachlan has made a mockery of the sanctity of the mate bond. I will look into your account of events. If what you are saying is true then we will grant you the ability to live here on the pack border for now" He said to me.

"I will need to meet Mason and Kaia, as well as verifying their version of events". He proclaims.

"I understand. Do you want me to call them for you?" I ask him.

"There's no need for that. I will go into Headquarters and speak with them there." He says.

"But, they are working, and there are humans around, are you sure you want to do that?" I ask.

"I think it will be fine. Especially considering I own that bar. In fact I own almost the entire town." He says with a smirk on his face.

I look at him in shock. That means he probably owns the Tavern, where I work. That means that this isn't a human town after all. We had really messed up here. Of all the places.

"It was nice meeting you Aleksa. I will be in touch." He says standing up from the couch.

"Uh, it was nice to meet you too, uh, I just realized that I don't actually know your name?" I say to him realizing that he never introduced himself.

“Kingston, it’s Kingston.” He says with a cheeky grin on his face.

Kingston, I think to myself, for some reason hearing his name makes my heart happy. I feel warm all over. It’s at this point I realize I have been staring at his face a little longer than I should have. He just grins at me.

“Thank you Kingston, I appreciate you considering this. I promise we won’t be a nuisance.” I say to him gratefully.

He turns and walks off. I shut the door. Then not a minute later I hear little feet running down the hallway.

“Mommy! Mommy!” Liam and Layla yell at me happily. “Pancakes Mommy!” They yell in unison with great big smiles on their faces, as I pick them up for cuddles. I then place them on the bench top in front of the kitchen window so that they can help me make the pancake batter.

They position themselves front facing towards the window. “Wolf mama, wolf!” They yell, and we watch a huge black wolf run into the forest.

Kingston. I think to myself. His wolf is magnificent. His human seems to be quite alluring to. I scold myself for thinking of him that way in a time like this. I need to be practical and think clearly. I can’t allow myself these thoughts. “But he’s so gorgeous Aleksa!” I hear Amber say and giggle in my head.

I haven’t heard anything from Amber since we were thrown in the dungeons. I wondered if she would ever speak to me again. “Ofcourse Aleksa, I am always here I just needed some time to heal. We can trust him Aleksa.” Amber says. “How do you know that?” I ask Amber. “Trust me, Aleksa. All will be revealed in due time”. She says to me cryptically.

Kingston POV

I am twenty eight years of age and I am the Alpha of the Rocky Mountain National Park Pack. We are the second largest pack in the country. I took over as Alpha from my father when I turned twenty two. I met my mate not long after becoming Alpha and we were happy for a while. Until she got sick. After a short battle with a terminal illness, she passed away. We didn’t get the chance to have pups, we had planned to enjoy our time together for a while before settling down to have pups, unfortunately fate had other plans for us.

For the past few years I have managed to dodge the council's plans for me. There has been huge pressure from the werewolf council for me to take a chosen mate as the pack's Luna, but I have no inclination to.

My sister Quinn takes care of most of the luna duties for our pack, and my mother supports her with this for now. I realize she can't do this forever, as she is yet to meet her mate too. Although, I have a bit of time before I need to figure out what happens next. Quinn is a bit younger than me, she's only twenty two.

Usually, you meet your mate when you gain your wolf at around eighteen years of age. So Quinn is feeling the pressure of not having met her mate. She has faith that he is still out there though, so she's just biding her time until she finds him.

With no heir to take over as Alpha, I will most likely have to pass it down to my Beta or his offspring. Although, I have no plans of relinquishing my role as Alpha any time soon.

Being that we are such a large pack and that we have a well respected and feared reputation, we are for the most part a warrior pack. So we almost never have any trouble here, other than the occasional rogue.

But that doesn't mean we are complacent. Everyone in our pack is required to train from three years of age, regardless of gender. We pride ourselves in knowing that everyone can fight to defend themselves, especially our most vulnerable wolves.

Right now I am busy organizing the Annual Royal Pack Summit which is taking place here at Rocky Mountain in the summertime. It's a big deal, alpha's from all around the country come to pay their respects and allegiance to the Royal Werewolf family, as well as network, and party. Since we have been tasked with hosting this year, there is a lot to do to ensure it all goes smoothly.

I have a committee of volunteers that are organizing most of it, but there are a number of packs that aren't on good terms and it is my duty to ensure that no hostility presents itself. So I am ringing each and every pack in the country to personally welcome them and get an idea of what we are dealing with when the time comes. We need to be able to separate rival packs to avoid any disturbances, and ensure it all goes smoothly.

I am on the phone in my office making calls to packs on the East Coast, when my Beta Asher comes into my office. I rub my forehead and look up at him sighing. I put my hand up and point a finger at him to gesture that I will just be a minute, and I continue on with the phone call I'm on.

I'm currently speaking with the alpha of the Evergreen Pack. He's a real piece of work, this guy, he's giving me some convoluted story about his Luna and pups were kidnapped by rogues. Apparently he sent an email, but I've yet to receive it.

I tell him I haven't seen or heard anything that would be helpful to him, and give him my offer of assistance should he ever need it. I agree to put up some fliers, and keep an eye out for anything suspicious. After some small talk I ended my call with him.

For some reason that phone call irks me. I feel disdain for this man. He sounded ingenuine and I believe there is more to this story than he is letting on. I have no idea why I feel this way but it's just a feeling I have.

Asher starts rattling on about some humans staying at the old log cabin, well he assumes they are human, but isn't overly convinced, so he's going to dig a little deeper and keep a close eye on them. I'm too busy to deal with this right now, so I agree with him and fob him off for now. I feel like a little guilty, but I'm under so much pressure right now, and I'm sure it's nothing he can't handle.

While he was telling me about them I felt my wolf stirring inside me. Maybe he's been stuck indoors too long and he wants to get out of this office and go for a run. I look up at the clock. I've put in a few good hours so far, so I decide that I'll take an early lunch break and get back to this a bit later.

I walk out of the pack house and jog down the stairs. I look around from one side of the pack grounds to another. It's pretty quiet this morning, most wolves are at school or work or training at this time of day. I rip my clothes off and start shifting and run into the woods.

My bones start to c***k out of place and extend then slowly fall back into place, fur sprouts out all over my hands and arms and body. I start to pound into the forest floor feeling the crisp air hit my snout. This release is exactly what I needed right now. A break from the mundane office work and never ending pack calls. Just me and Sabre and the great outdoors.

Sabre takes over and he runs in a specific direction. He runs to the far right side of the woods, and he starts running alongside the Falls River. Before long we are approaching the area that Asher was talking about this morning. If only I could remember what he was saying earlier, my curiosity has piqued.

We have reached the old log cabin and there aren't any cars outside, perhaps no one is home we ponder. We take a few deep sniffs and we are intrigued by one of the scents we pick up. So we start moving towards the front window. A few yards in we stop in our tracks. From where we are standing we can see the most beautiful woman.

She's gorgeous with long thick darkest brown hair, crystal blue eyes, perfectly plump pink lips and snow white skin. She looks like she is deep in thought. We wonder if this is one of the humans Asher was telling us about. We will have to find him and ask him for more information when I get back. For now I just watch her for a while discretely from behind a great old oak tree.

We watch for a while, then we turn back into the forest determined to find out more about the mysterious woman at the old log cabin.

I feel restless tonight. I can't stop thinking about the beauty I saw at the old log cabin. I decided to take Sabre for a late night run in the dark. We are running for hours when we decide that we've had enough and start making our way back to the woods. We are weaving in and out of the trees when we catch the faintest whiff of the scent we picked up at the old log cabin.

Sabre decides that we need to investigate. We are in the middle of nowhere running alongside a dusty old gravel road when we hear a car. We can hear music playing, it sounds like cold heart. I know that song everywhere it's been played over and over again on almost every radio throughout the country.

We pick up our pace to match the car, glancing to our right side, we can make out that long dark hair flowing in the wind. It's her! At that moment she catches us with her eyes and turns to look at us, so we pick up the pace even further and boost past the car.

We make it back to the Falls River just before she does, and we watch her exit the car, from the shelter of the old oak tree. We watch as she makes her way to the front door, watching her slowly look back at the river and then amongst the trees we are standing in. She then turns and walks into the

house. Once we are happy that she has made it safely inside, we turn back towards the woods and make our way back to the packhouse.

Sabre and myself are both pent up full of energy this morning. We have woken up at the c***k of dawn and we plan to meet the mysterious beauty that is currently dominating our thoughts.

We managed to find out from Asher that the woman in question was Aleksa, Correct me if i'm wrong but Aleksa translated means "defender", that's a pretty impressive name. According to Asher, she has two children.

Mason and Kaia I was able to identify from their security swipe card photos, as they are working at one of my clubs in town. Asher says they are already settling in, and making friends, and although he can't scent anything specific, he still feels all is not as it seems with them.

After jumping in the shower, I head to the packhouse kitchen for a light breakfast. Then I shift into my wolf form and dash off into the woods. I take a change of clothes with me to change into once I reach the edge of the forest where the old log cabin is.

In no time, I am outside the cabin, walking up the porch stairs and knocking on the door. After a few moments the door opens and I am face to face with Aleksa.

The first thing I notice is that her scent is even stronger, she's a werewolf! She smells delicious – like peony blossom and peach nectar. My senses are overwhelmed.

I wonder how Asher could have missed this. Her scent is doing all sorts of things to me right now. For some reason I find myself wildly attracted to her, and it is taking all my willpower to not act on these feelings right now.

I can sense her fear radiating from her, it's practically palpable. I can smell the perspiration building on her forehead. At this moment she appears to be lost in her thoughts, so I clear my throat to get her attention back. I start by making small talk, but I won't beat around the bush. I need some answers and I need them now.

She starts to plead with me. It was not my intention to scare her, I try to relax her and tell her that I mean her no harm. I just have a few questions to ask her.

I ask her to explain herself, and she starts to tell me about what happened in her pack with her fated mate, and how she had to flee the pack to get away from his cruel ways, as well as protecting her children. I am repressing my growls, as I don't want to scare her any further. But I am beyond pissed off, how someone could treat their goddess given mate that way was beyond me.

She explains how Mason and Kaia were rogues but through no fault of their own, it would appear they found themselves in positions similar to that of Aleksa and they formed a bond together. I would need to do some investigation to make sure their stories checked out, although I can't imagine they would have much to gain by lying to me, they seem genuine.

I ask her which pack she is from and she starts to panic. She is reluctant to give me this information, and I am struggling to keep my cool. I don't mean to but before I realize what I have done I have alpha commanded her to tell me. So she does.

I am not surprised when she tells me she is from the Evergreen pack. As she was telling me her story I started to link it to what I had heard from Alpha Lachlan on our phone call the other day.

I am not surprised she is Luna. She is beautiful and strong and she has a kind and caring aura about her. But I need to verify this story. People have a tendency to lie when they are scared or desperate. And she is clearly very scared. I don't think she is lying though. I sense she is being truthful.

We talk some more, I advise her that I will be having a conversation with both Mason and Kaia separately, she doesn't seem concerned, she even offers to help organize the meeting, although I explain it is not necessary as I will be seeing them at the club.

Before I leave she asks for my name. I was so wrapped up in asking her questions, I didn't even introduce myself. She stares at me for a few moments and I can't quite figure out what she's thinking as she stares at me with a sweet smile on her face. Then as if she realizes that she is staring at me she thanks me for my visit and farewells me closing the door.

As I am walking down the stairs I hear two little voices calling out to their mommy, with my werewolf hearing. The twins must be awake I think to myself. I really want to meet them for some reason, as does Sabre. But we resist the urge. Once I get to the tree line, I shift into my wolf, seeing that the twins are watching from the window. Sabre and I leap off following the forest path, feeling quite happy with myself and thinking about that sweet scent of peony blossom and peach nectar.

Aleksa POV

It's been a week since Kingston appeared at my doorstep, and I haven't seen him since that day. We are all settled into life in Denver, having been here a couple of weeks now. Liam and Layla are loving the daycare that they attend. The ladies who run it, and work there, are so kind and nurturing, the twins are really thriving there. They've even managed to make a few friends and have a few playdates. I've even made a few mom friends myself. We go for coffee on the weekend while the children play at the park. It's a far cry from our life at Evergreen, which was so much more isolated. I didn't have any mom friends. I mean I only had Eva and Kali, and look how Eva turned out. Kali is a keeper though, I sure miss her. I think of her often.

Mason and Kaia are enjoying working at the club, naturally they have already been promoted since starting there. Their natural leadership skills are obviously hard to ignore. Mason is now running the security team there, and has been asked to manage security for another two clubs in town. Kaia is no longer working as hostess, she is working within management. They both seem happy. We didn't talk much about our lives before we came here, we all decided we wanted to move forward and focus on our new lives. We didn't want the negativity of our pasts constantly hanging over us.

Recently we heard from Caleb and Kali, they had finally safely reached Crimson Moon and were greeted with open arms by Alpha Callum and his Luna Cadence. They had to lay low for a while in a human town initially as they were surrounded by the Evergreen pack warriors, but they managed to escape a week later. It sounded like things were pretty tough for them for a while. I am so happy that they are safe now. I still feel guilty that their lives were uprooted the way they were. However, they assure me that they would do it again in a heartbeat. I'm grateful for such loyal and courageous friends.

Every day I count myself lucky that Lachlan hasn't found me or the twins, or my friends yet. We have no way of knowing where he is looking for us, although I imagine he would be looking high and low for Liam, being that he is

the rightful heir to Evergreen Pack. I know the day will come when he finds us and we will have to fight for our freedom once again. All I can do right now is make sure we are ready when that time comes. Mason, Kaia and I have been working on multiple escape plans for the twins and I, and we are almost ready for when the time comes.

Today I have the day off work. I have dropped the twins off at daycare, and Mason and Kaia are both at work, so I don't know what to do with myself. I've been working a lot recently. Since we left Evergreen in such a hurry, we were unprepared. We had no savings or back up plans, so I've been working extra shifts so that I can put some money inside for when we have to move on again.

I look around at the cabin, it's pretty immaculate so that rules cleaning out. I look in the pantry and it's looking a little empty so I guess I can go grocery shopping. Although I am feeling restless at the moment, so, I try to channel Amber to see if she would like to go for a run.

After a few attempts I hear no reply from her in my head, so I guess shifting is out of the question right now. I almost can't remember the last time we shifted. Amber has been so distant since everything that went down with Lachlan, I think she misses Cyrus, Lachlan's wolf. She has only spoken to me once since we escaped from Evergreen, and that was when we met Kingston.

A cheeky smile erupts on my face when I think of Kingston. Gosh he is divine. He's tall, he's tanned, he's muscular, he has a smile that just makes me want to melt. He has a commanding no nonsense type of aura about him. But then he's understanding and seems sincere. I feel so attracted to him. It's so unlike me. I'm not that girl that falls all over a guy. It's so bizarre, I should be mourning the death of my relationship with Lachlan, not getting all turned on but the hot alpha of the Rocky Mountain Pack. Get a grip Aleksa – I think to myself.

I figured that because I had rejected my fated mate I would be sick. I had always been told that rejecting or being rejected by your fated mate would make you weak and potentially k**l you, but I wasn't feeling any of that. In all honesty, I had never felt better. Maybe a little weak physically, but mentally I feel freer than I ever have.

I can't even feel Lachlan being intimate with someone anymore. Perhaps my rejecting our bond was enough? I thought that he needed to accept my rejection though. It's so confusing. Perhaps I needed to see someone, a witch

or a healer or perhaps a shaman. I wouldn't even know where to start come to think of it. Perhaps I would discuss this with Kaia later on tonight and see what she thinks about it all.

Thinking about Kingston had gotten me all wound up. So I decided I would go for a run, and since Amber isn't talking to me I will just go in my human form. I look around my room to find something acceptable to run in.

I picked up some black leggings and a black sports bra and put them on. I grab the only pair of shoes I have that would be suitable, my black converse shoes, and pull my hair into a high ponytail.

I walk through the house, shut the door, run down the stairs and start stretching. I take a deep breath in of fresh air, and decide that this is exactly what I need. So I started jogging off into the woods to relieve myself of some s****l frustration.

I've been running for about forty five minutes now and I realize I am completely lost. I thought I was following a trail but clearly I went off track at some point. I'm not worried because I am a wolf and I love the woods. So I try to communicate with Amber but she's still not reachable. I slow down to walk a bit and take a look at my surroundings. If I could just find some sort of landmark, or listen for some sort of sound like running water or traffic or something.

I didn't bring anything with me so I can't keep track of the time. Although I don't have to pick up Liam and Layla until much later today so that doesn't concern me.

I start to backtrack hoping that I am going back in the right direction. After a few hours I stop. Great one Aleksa. Lost in the middle of nowhere, with no wolf to rely on. My stomach starts to growl and I wish that I had some breakfast before I left, or even a drink of water.

I decide that I will keep walking straight until I find the river or the road, or something resembling the right direction.

After some time passes, I get the feeling I am not alone. I can't hear anything but I can sense company is near.

I start regretting this bright idea I had to go for a run in the woods without my wolf. I hear a twig snap and I look behind me. I can smell them before I see them. Rogues. There appears to be two of them. They start to snarl at me. They both look pretty mangey, and they smell terrible like rotten meat. I would imagine it has been a while since they last showered. I am fighting the urge to vomit right now. My gag reflex is going strong. They slowly start to stalk towards me, both coming towards me, one from the right and one from the left.

I start to panic and try to wake Amber up, "Come on girl I could really use your help right now, we need to shift. Amber!!! Please! Rogues! I need to shift." I yell at her desperately in my head.

"What's a pretty she wolf doing out here all on her lonesome?" The brown one with white stripes all around its torso says to me.

"Looking for some fun, shewolf?" The other rogue says licking it's licks and smirking at me, it is also brown, with red stripes over it's back and belly.

"Uh, no thank you. I was just on my way back to.. My pack." I say.

"Liar. You have no pack. You don't smell like a rogue." he sniffs the air near me. "You smell so sweet, and I can sense that you are ranked, but you don't smell like a pack wolf". The brown and white coloured rogue says matter of factly.

"That's right so you better back off – NOW!" I say. Hoping that will make them think twice, but deep down inside knowing that it won't. I am well aware that I am outnumbered and out wolfed.

"Hahaha. Nice try, she wolf. You are weak. Your wolf is not with you right now!" the brown and white rogue says with a sinister smile on it's face.

I take a defensive stance, as I am well aware that these rogues want more than a chat from me, and I am resigned to the fact that I will have to defend myself in human form.

I only wish I was trained to defend myself. I never got a chance to train at Evergreen because I had gotten pregnant straight away and then I was constantly weak from the pain of Lachlan cheating. I had done a few self defense classes back in the human town I grew up in before meeting Lachlan but that was about it. Moon goddess please protect me! I prayed silently.

The brown and white coloured rogue lunged towards me, and I was able to move out of his way just in time, only to be pounced on by the brown and red striped rogue. He furiously bit into the side of my waist, taking a chunk of skin out of my side. I could feel the excruciating, stabbing pain take over my body. "Aahhhhh!" I screamed in pain and shock. I could smell the overwhelming metallic odor of my blood oozing out of me.

At that moment, the brown and white striped rogue got back up on it's feet, and plunged towards me as I stood up. He knocked me hard onto the ground. I tried to push him off me but he had me pinned to the ground, and I was feeling weak from the bite on my waist. He started to snap at my neck, going for my jugular. I felt an unimaginable fear inside me at that moment. Was this it? Is this how I would die? No f#\$%ing way! I will fight to my last breath for my pups, I tell myself.

I punched the rogue in the throat as hard as I could, and used all my strength to push the rogue to the side, it started to choke, and took a moment to get it's breath back then got ready to charge me again. The other rogue was circling me with a feral and satisfied look on it's face.

I clutched at my side trying to place pressure on my wound. I could feel that I was losing too much blood. I started to feel dizzy. I could see the rogues smirking and mumbling something. I saw the red and white one lunge towards me, and just as it was opening its mouth to snap its teeth at my neck, I started to fall to the ground, and all I saw was darkness.

Aleksa POV

I woke up to the sound of machines beeping. I took a few deep breaths and I could smell bleach mixed with antiseptic. Where am I, I asked myself. I tried to open my eyes and everything felt so bright. And I felt so tired, so I gave up and faded back into sleep.

I could hear a faint voice calling out my name, multiple times. Then I smelt the faint scent of fresh pine, it was my favourite scent, as the forest was my favourite place. I started to open my eyes again and this time even though it was overwhelmingly bright, I succeeded in fully opening them.

I felt slight tingles on my hand, It must be static electricity from the bed and the machines I thought. Then I looked down. It was Kingston. He was holding my hand, sitting beside me, looking at me with what looked like relief on his

face. I tried to speak but my mouth was so dry, I managed to croak out “water”.

Kingston obliged and helped me with some water in a cup and a straw. I took a few sips initially, then I greedily took more. The thirst within me was intense. I felt like I hadn't had any water in days.

I tried again to speak, this time I was successful, although I had to cough in between words.

“Where am I?” I manage to say in between coughs, looking around confused. As I tried to sit up a bit, I was engulfed with pain, a stabbing pain at my waist. I grabbed it with my hand and I could feel a large dressing. I looked back up at Kingston.

“The rogues? But how did I get here?” I asked.

“I can explain, don't panic, you are safe Aleksa”. Kingston reassures me. He then proceeds to tell me how I got here.

“I was out for a run in the woods, when I smelt rogues, I could sense danger, so I kept running until I saw you.” Kingston tells me.

“You were bleeding profusely, and the rogues appeared to be going in for the k**l, so I took them both out, and then I rushed you here.” He tells me, with anger starting to radiate from his aura.

I look at him, I'm overcome with emotion, I feel so grateful to him, if he hadn't been out there, I would be dead. “Thank you, I don't know how I can ever repay you for this.” I say to him with a sincere look upon my face.

Then I realize I am here, but my pups are not, “Oh my goddess, Liam and Layla! Daycare! I was supposed to pick them up. I've got to go!” I say as I try to pull myself up in a hurry leading to my stitches bursting. I feel the blood start to rush out of my wound, the metallic smell overwhelming my senses. What on earth? I think to myself. I am a werewolf. Why have I not healed?

Kingston panics and calls the doctors in to tend to my wound, he holds pressure on it, until they arrive, then they start stitching my wound up again.

“You need to be more careful Aleksa, your wolf is not with you right now, your healing will be that of a human's healing right now”. He tells me.

He then goes on to tell me a healer came in earlier and said that my wolf was away, but would be back, that she just needed some time to heal.

“Liam and Layla, are here, at Rocky Mountain. So are Mason and Kaia, you have all been granted an exemption, you are here as my guests. They will be in shortly. I have mindlinked my Beta Asher to inform them that you are awake.” He says.

I sigh in relief. I am glad that my pups are close by and that I will get to see them. But I have so many questions. I look up at Kingston and I start to ask him “How long have I been out?”.

To which he replied, “Three days. You have been in a coma for the past three days.” He says with a sadness exuding from him.

I am shocked “Three days? How can that be? Why did I sleep so long?” I ask, starting to panic that I have worried my pups and friends for the past three days.

“Your wolf wasn’t with you to speed up the healing process, and your injuries were critical. But you’re awake now and your body is slowly repairing itself” Kingston exclaims.

Kingston looks at me as though there is something on his mind. “Tell me, Aleksa, what were you doing in that part of the forest alone at that time of day?”.

I look at him perplexed. “I was going for a run, I got lost, then I came across the rogues”. Remembering my encounter with them.

“You really shouldn’t be so careless in future, that part of the territory isn’t often utilized by our pack, although it is our territory we generally keep away from it. It borders on the forsaken territory.” He warns me.

“When you are recovered, we can show you the territorial boundaries, and explain it all a bit more. For now, I would advise you to keep to the main track or even the main road, if you are running in human form” he then pauses, looks at me and continues, “There is something I need to discuss with you but it can wait until you are out of hospital.” Kingston says.

At that moment, the door bursts open and Mason and Kaia walk in with two very energetic and happy children “Mommy!” They call to me in sync.

“Mommy, we missed you! They tell me. They are about to jump on me when they are pulled back by Mason and Kaia.

“Slow down there pups, we don’t want to hurt mommy now do we?” Kaia says to Liam and Layla.

They just look at me wide eyed. “Mommy is so happy to see you both. I have missed you so much while I was sleeping.” I tell them with tears ready to fall from my eyes.

We all chat for a while, and Kingston stays sitting next to me the whole time. I find it strange that he seems so protective of me, but at the same time, I really don’t want him to leave. Something about his scent keeps me calm and makes me feel safe. Two things I haven’t felt in a long time.

After about half an hour I am struggling to keep my eyes open. Mason and Kingston start to notice, and suggest it might be time for everyone to leave so that I can get some sleep. We all say goodbyes and I am able to hug my pups goodbye gently. I thank Mason and Kaia for looking after them and promise I will be out tomorrow, to which Kingston looks at me doubtfully.

They all leave, but Kingston doesn’t. “Are you not going to leave as well?” I ask him, struggling to fight against my heavy eyes. “I will wait for you to fall asleep, then I will leave to attend to some pack matters, close your eyes Aleksa, get some sleep” he says.

Then I lose my fight to stay awake and drift off to sleep.

I had been in hospital for a total of five days now, and the medical team were satisfied that I was medically stable, and I was able to leave this morning. To say I was excited was an understatement. I couldn’t wait to get out of here, don’t get me wrong it was a state of the art hospital, everything was so bright and white and clean, it was a simple room with a bed in the middle of the room connected with monitors and equipment, and a panel above the bed with oxygen and suction and various other switches and medical supplies. Beside me was a small bedside table with a jug of water and cup on it. To the left of me there was a door leading to an ensuite bathroom with a walk in shower and a gorgeous sink and vanity with a large mirror. It was well stocked with environmentally friendly sustainable products.

Everyone here was so professional, from the Nurses and Doctors to the healthcare assistants and kitchen staff that brought me my meals.

The food was first class. I don't think I have ever eaten so well. I mean I have always cooked healthy and tasty meals, it's just you notice it more when someone else is cooking for you and you are on the receiving end.

However, that all said. I missed my pups greatly, I had never been separated from them like this before, with the exception being when Lachlan threw me into the dungeon at Evergreen.

I was also worried that I had missed too many shifts at work, but being that Kingston owned the Tavern, he said he had told Sierra that I would be off for a week or so, so there was no pressure there, but I still felt guilty letting my new team down, especially since I had just recently started.

I just wanted to get back to my new life, which had barely just started. I had told myself that this was just a temporary setback and I wouldn't let it hold me back.

One thing I would definitely miss about being here was the daily visits from Kingston. I could look at his face all day. I felt butterflies just thinking about him. Drool.

I walked to the bathroom to have a quick shower. Mason would be in shortly as he was picking me up to take me back to the old log cabin.

When I walked out of the shower Kingston was waiting at my bedside for me. I was standing at the ensuite door with nothing but a towel on. I stood there shocked. I was not expecting anyone else to be in the room, or I would have changed in the bathroom.

I stood there with my mouth wide open, looking at Kingston, feeling uber anxious that he was seeing me this way.

He was sitting there with a smirk on his face, something flashing in his eyes, amber flecks, his wolf surfacing perhaps.

"I'm sorry I didn't realize anyone else was in here, I'll just grab my clothes and change, I won't be long" I say picking the outfit that had been left for me the other day up off my bed and darting for the bathroom.

Nice one Aleksa, I scold myself. My heart racing and my body responding to the gorgeous wolf sitting only meters away from where I was getting changed.

I quickly throw my black halter neck dress on and my black crossover sandals on and brush my hair in front of the mirror.

Once I feel I look acceptable I walk out of the bathroom to greet Kingston.

“Aleksa, you look beautiful, please sit, there is something I would like to discuss with you” Kingston says sitting on the chair next to my hospital bed, with what looks like I**t in his eyes, trailing my every move.

Luna Aleksa’s Escape Chapter 18

Kingston POV

I am twenty eight years of age and I am the Alpha of the Rocky Mountain National Park Pack. We are the second largest pack in the country. I took over as Alpha from my father when I turned twenty two. I met my mate not long after becoming Alpha and we were happy for a while. Until she got sick. After a short battle with a terminal illness, she passed away. We didn’t get the chance to have pups, we had planned to enjoy our time together for a while before settling down to have pups, unfortunately fate had other plans for us.

For the past few years I have managed to dodge the council’s plans for me. There has been huge pressure from the werewolf council for me to take a chosen mate as the pack’s Luna, but I have no inclination to.

My sister Quinn takes care of most of the luna duties for our pack, and my mother supports her with this for now. I realize she can’t do this forever, as she is yet to meet her mate too. Although, I have a bit of time before I need to figure out what happens next. Quinn is a bit younger than me, she’s only twenty two.

Usually, you meet your mate when you gain your wolf at around eighteen years of age. So Quinn is feeling the pressure of not having met her mate. She has faith that he is still out there though, so she’s just biding her time until she finds him.

With no heir to take over as Alpha, I will most likely have to pass it down to my Beta or his offspring. Although, I have no plans of relinquishing my role as Alpha any time soon.

Being that we are such a large pack and that we have a well respected and feared reputation, we are for the most part a warrior pack. So we almost never have any trouble here, other than the occasional rogue.

But that doesn't mean we are complacent. Everyone in our pack is required to train from three years of age, regardless of gender. We pride ourselves in knowing that everyone can fight to defend themselves, especially our most vulnerable wolves.

Right now I am busy organizing the Annual Royal Pack Summit which is taking place here at Rocky Mountain in the summertime. It's a big deal, alpha's from all around the country come to pay their respects and allegiance to the Royal Werewolf family, as well as network, and party. Since we have been tasked with hosting this year, there is a lot to do to ensure it all goes smoothly.

I have a committee of volunteers that are organizing most of it, but there are a number of packs that aren't on good terms and it is my duty to ensure that no hostility presents itself. So I am ringing each and every pack in the country to personally welcome them and get an idea of what we are dealing with when the time comes. We need to be able to separate rival packs to avoid any disturbances, and ensure it all goes smoothly.

I am on the phone in my office making calls to packs on the East Coast, when my Beta Asher comes into my office. I rub my forehead and look up at him sighing. I put my hand up and point a finger at him to gesture that I will just be a minute, and I continue on with the phone call I'm on.

I'm currently speaking with the alpha of the Evergreen Pack. He's a real piece of work, this guy, he's giving me some convoluted story about his Luna and pups were kidnapped by rogues. Apparently he sent an email, but I've yet to receive it.

I tell him I haven't seen or heard anything that would be helpful to him, and give him my offer of assistance should he ever need it. I agree to put up some fliers, and keep an eye out for anything suspicious. After some small talk I ended my call with him.

For some reason that phone call irks me. I feel disdain for this man. He sounded ingenuine and I believe there is more to this story then he is letting on. I have no idea why I feel this way but it's just a feeling I have.

Asher starts rattling on about some humans staying at the old log cabin, well he assumes they are human, but isn't overly convinced, so he's going to dig a little deeper and keep a close eye on them. I'm too busy to deal with this right now, so I agree with him and fob him off for now. I feel like a little guilty, but I'm under so much pressure right now, and I'm sure it's nothing he can't handle.

While he was telling me about them I felt my wolf stirring inside me. Maybe he's been stuck indoors too long and he wants to get out of this office and go for a run. I look up at the clock. I've put in a few good hours so far, so I decide that I'll take an early lunch break and get back to this a bit later.

I walk out of the pack house and jog down the stairs. I look around from one side of the pack grounds to another. It's pretty quiet this morning, most wolves are at school or work or training at this time of day. I rip my clothes off and start shifting and run into the woods.

My bones start to c***k out of place and extend then slowly fall back into place, fur sprouts out all over my hands and arms and body. I start to pound into the forest floor feeling the crisp air hit my snout. This release is exactly what I needed right now. A break from the mundane office work and never ending pack calls. Just me and Sabre and the great outdoors.

Sabre takes over and he runs in a specific direction. He runs to the far right side of the woods, and he starts running alongside the Falls River. Before long we are approaching the area that Asher was talking about this morning. If only I could remember what he was saying earlier, my curiosity has piqued.

We have reached the old log cabin and there aren't any cars outside, perhaps no one is home we ponder. We take a few deep sniffs and we are intrigued by one of the scents we pick up. So we start moving towards the front window. A few yards in we stop in our tracks. From where we are standing we can see the most beautiful woman.

She's gorgeous with long thick darkest brown hair, crystal blue eyes, perfectly plump pink lips and snow white skin. She looks like she is deep in thought. We wonder if this is one of the humans Asher was telling us about. We will have to find him and ask him for more information when I get back. For now I just watch her for a while discretely from behind a great old oak tree.

We watch for a while, then we turn back into the forest determined to find out more about the mysterious woman at the old log cabin.

I feel restless tonight. I can't stop thinking about the beauty I saw at the old log cabin. I decided to take Sabre for a late night run in the dark. We are running for hours when we decide that we've had enough and start making our way back to the woods. We are weaving in and out of the trees when we catch the faintest whiff of the scent we picked up at the old log cabin.

Sabre decides that we need to investigate. We are in the middle of nowhere running alongside a dusty old gravel road when we hear a car. We can hear music playing, it sounds like cold heart. I know that song everywhere it's been played over and over again on almost every radio throughout the country.

We pick up our pace to match the car, glancing to our right side, we can make out that long dark hair flowing in the wind. It's her! At that moment she catches us with her eyes and turns to look at us, so we pick up the pace even further and boost past the car.

We make it back to the Falls River just before she does, and we watch her exit the car, from the shelter of the old oak tree. We watch as she makes her way to the front door, watching her slowly look back at the river and then amongst the trees we are standing in. She then turns and walks into the house. Once we are happy that she has made it safely inside, we turn back towards the woods and make our way back to the packhouse.

Sabre and myself are both pent up full of energy this morning. We have woken up at the c***k of dawn and we plan to meet the mysterious beauty that is currently dominating our thoughts.

We managed to find out from Asher that the woman in question was Aleksa, Correct me if i'm wrong but Aleksa translated means "defender", that's a pretty impressive name. According to Asher, she has two children.

Mason and Kaia I was able to identify from their security swipe card photos, as they are working at one of my clubs in town. Asher says they are already settling in, and making friends, and although he can't scent anything specific, he still feels all is not as it seems with them.

After jumping in the shower, I head to the packhouse kitchen for a light breakfast. Then I shift into my wolf form and dash off into the woods. I take a

change of clothes with me to change into once I reach the edge of the forest where the old log cabin is.

In no time, I am outside the cabin, walking up the porch stairs and knocking on the door. After a few moments the door opens and I am face to face with Aleksa.

The first thing I notice is that her scent is even stronger, she's a werewolf! She smells delicious – like peony blossom and peach nectar. My senses are overwhelmed.

I wonder how Asher could have missed this. Her scent is doing all sorts of things to me right now. For some reason I find myself wildly attracted to her, and it is taking all my willpower to not act on these feelings right now.

I can sense her fear radiating from her, it's practically palpable. I can smell the perspiration building on her forehead. At this moment she appears to be lost in her thoughts, so I clear my throat to get her attention back. I start by making small talk, but I won't beat around the bush. I need some answers and I need them now.

She starts to plead with me. It was not my intention to scare her, I try to relax her and tell her that I mean her no harm. I just have a few questions to ask her.

I ask her to explain herself, and she starts to tell me about what happened in her pack with her fated mate, and how she had to flee the pack to get away from his cruel ways, as well as protecting her children. I am repressing my growls, as I don't want to scare her any further. But I am beyond pissed off, how someone could treat their goddess given mate that way was beyond me.

She explains how Mason and Kaia were rogues but through no fault of their own, it would appear they found themselves in positions similar to that of Aleksa and they formed a bond together. I would need to do some investigation to make sure their stories checked out, although I can't imagine they would have much to gain by lying to me, they seem genuine.

I ask her which pack she is from and she starts to panic. She is reluctant to give me this information, and I am struggling to keep my cool. I don't mean to but before I realize what I have done I have alpha commanded her to tell me. So she does.

I am not surprised when she tells me she is from the Evergreen pack. As she was telling me her story I started to link it to what I had heard from Alpha Lachlan on our phone call the other day.

I am not surprised she is Luna. She is beautiful and strong and she has a kind and caring aura about her. But I need to verify this story. People have a tendency to lie when they are scared or desperate. And she is clearly very scared. I don't think she is lying though. I sense she is being truthful.

We talk some more, I advise her that I will be having a conversation with both Mason and Kaia separately, she doesn't seem concerned, she even offers to help organize the meeting, although I explain it is not necessary as I will be seeing them at the club.

Before I leave she asks for my name. I was so wrapped up in asking her questions, I didn't even introduce myself. She stares at me for a few moments and I can't quite figure out what she's thinking as she stares at me with a sweet smile on her face. Then as if she realizes that she is staring at me she thanks me for my visit and farewells me closing the door.

As I am walking down the stairs I hear two little voices calling out to their mommy, with my werewolf hearing. The twins must be awake I think to myself. I really want to meet them for some reason, as does Sabre. But we resist the urge. Once I get to the tree line, I shift into my wolf, seeing that the twins are watching from the window. Sabre and I leap off following the forest path, feeling quite happy with myself and thinking about that sweet scent of peony blossom and peach nectar.

Aleksa POV

It's been a week since Kingston appeared at my doorstep, and I haven't seen him since that day. We are all settled into life in Denver, having been here a couple of weeks now. Liam and Layla are loving the daycare that they attend. The ladies who run it, and work there, are so kind and nurturing, the twins are really thriving there. They've even managed to make a few friends and have a few playdates. I've even made a few mom friends myself. We go for coffee on the weekend while the children play at the park. It's a far cry from our life at Evergreen, which was so much more isolated. I didn't have any mom friends. I mean I only had Eva and Kali, and look how Eva turned out. Kali is a keeper though, I sure miss her. I think of her often.

Mason and Kaia are enjoying working at the club, naturally they have already been promoted since starting there. Their natural leadership skills are obviously hard to ignore. Mason is now running the security team there, and has been asked to manage security for another two clubs in town. Kaia is no longer working as hostess, she is working within management. They both seem happy. We didn't talk much about our lives before we came here, we all decided we wanted to move forward and focus on our new lives. We didn't want the negativity of our pasts constantly hanging over us.

Recently we heard from Caleb and Kali, they had finally safely reached Crimson Moon and were greeted with open arms by Alpha Callum and his Luna Cadence. They had to lay low for a while in a human town initially as they were surrounded by the Evergreen pack warriors, but they managed to escape a week later. It sounded like things were pretty tough for them for a while. I am so happy that they are safe now. I still feel guilty that their lives were uprooted the way they were. However, they assure me that they would do it again in a heartbeat. I'm grateful for such loyal and courageous friends.

Every day I count myself lucky that Lachlan hasn't found me or the twins, or my friends yet. We have no way of knowing where he is looking for us, although I imagine he would be looking high and low for Liam, being that he is the rightful heir to Evergreen Pack. I know the day will come when he finds us and we will have to fight for our freedom once again. All I can do right now is make sure we are ready when that time comes. Mason, Kaia and I have been working on multiple escape plans for the twins and I, and we are almost ready for when the time comes.

Today I have the day off work. I have dropped the twins off at daycare, and Mason and Kaia are both at work, so I don't know what to do with myself. I've been working a lot recently. Since we left Evergreen in such a hurry, we were unprepared. We had no savings or back up plans, so I've been working extra shifts so that I can put some money inside for when we have to move on again.

I look around at the cabin, it's pretty immaculate so that rules cleaning out. I look in the pantry and it's looking a little empty so I guess I can go grocery shopping. Although I am feeling restless at the moment, so, I try to channel Amber to see if she would like to go for a run.

After a few attempts I hear no reply from her in my head, so I guess shifting is out of the question right now. I almost can't remember the last time we shifted. Amber has been so distant since everything that went down with Lachlan, I

think she misses Cyrus, Lachlan's wolf. She has only spoken to me once since we escaped from Evergreen, and that was when we met Kingston.

A cheeky smile erupts on my face when I think of Kingston. Gosh he is divine. He's tall, he's tanned, he's muscular, he has a smile that just makes me want to melt. He has a commanding no nonsense type of aura about him. But then he's understanding and seems sincere. I feel so attracted to him. It's so unlike me. I'm not that girl that falls all over a guy. It's so bizarre, I should be mourning the death of my relationship with Lachlan, not getting all turned on but the hot alpha of the Rocky Mountain Pack. Get a grip Aleksa – I think to myself.

I figured that because I had rejected my fated mate I would be sick. I had always been told that rejecting or being rejected by your fated mate would make you weak and potentially k**l you, but I wasn't feeling any of that. In all honesty, I had never felt better. Maybe a little weak physically, but mentally I feel freer than I ever have.

I can't even feel Lachlan being intimate with someone anymore. Perhaps my rejecting our bond was enough? I thought that he needed to accept my rejection though. It's so confusing. Perhaps I needed to see someone, a witch or a healer or perhaps a shaman. I wouldn't even know where to start come to think of it. Perhaps I would discuss this with Kaia later on tonight and see what she thinks about it all.

Thinking about Kingston had gotten me all wound up. So I decided I would go for a run, and since Amber isn't talking to me I will just go in my human form. I look around my room to find something acceptable to run in.

I picked up some black leggings and a black sports bra and put them on. I grab the only pair of shoes I have that would be suitable, my black converse shoes, and pull my hair into a high ponytail.

I walk through the house, shut the door, run down the stairs and start stretching. I take a deep breath in of fresh air, and decide that this is exactly what I need. So I started jogging off into the woods to relieve myself of some s****l frustration.

I've been running for about forty five minutes now and I realize I am completely lost. I thought I was following a trail but clearly I went off track at

some point. I'm not worried because I am a wolf and I love the woods. So I try to communicate with Amber but she's still not reachable. I slow down to walk a bit and take a look at my surroundings. If I could just find some sort of landmark, or listen for some sort of sound like running water or traffic or something.

I didn't bring anything with me so I can't keep track of the time. Although I don't have to pick up Liam and Layla until much later today so that doesn't concern me.

I start to backtrack hoping that I am going back in the right direction. After a few hours I stop. Great one Aleksa. Lost in the middle of nowhere, with no wolf to rely on. My stomach starts to growl and I wish that I had some breakfast before I left, or even a drink of water.

I decide that I will keep walking straight until I find the river or the road, or something resembling the right direction.

After some time passes, I get the feeling I am not alone. I can't hear anything but I can sense company is near.

I start regretting this bright idea I had to go for a run in the woods without my wolf. I hear a twig snap and I look behind me. I can smell them before I see them. Rogues. There appears to be two of them. They start to snarl at me. They both look pretty mangey, and they smell terrible like rotten meat. I would imagine it has been a while since they last showered. I am fighting the urge to vomit right now. My gag reflex is going strong. They slowly start to stalk towards me, both coming towards me, one from the right and one from the left.

I start to panic and try to wake Amber up, "Come on girl I could really use your help right now, we need to shift. Amber!!! Please! Rogues! I need to shift." I yell at her desperately in my head.

"What's a pretty she wolf doing out here all on her lonesome?" The brown one with white stripes all around its torso says to me.

"Looking for some fun, shewolf?" The other rogue says licking it's licks and smirking at me, it is also brown, with red stripes over it's back and belly.

"Uh, no thank you. I was just on my way back to.. My pack." I say.

“Liar. You have no pack. You don’t smell like a rogue.” he sniffs the air near me. “You smell so sweet, and I can sense that you are ranked, but you don’t smell like a pack wolf”. The brown and white coloured rogue says matter of factly.

“That’s right so you better back off – NOW!” I say. Hoping that will make them think twice, but deep down inside knowing that it won’t. I am well aware that I am outnumbered and out wolfed.

“Hahaha. Nice try, she wolf. You are weak. Your wolf is not with you right now!” the brown and white rogue says with a sinister smile on it’s face.

I take a defensive stance, as I am well aware that these rogues want more than a chat from me, and I am resigned to the fact that I will have to defend myself in human form.

I only wish I was trained to defend myself. I never got a chance to train at Evergreen because I had gotten pregnant straight away and then I was constantly weak from the pain of Lachlan cheating. I had done a few self defense classes back in the human town I grew up in before meeting Lachlan but that was about it. Moon goddess please protect me! I prayed silently.

The brown and white coloured rogue lunged towards me, and I was able to move out of his way just in time, only to be pounced on by the brown and red striped rogue. He furiously bit into the side of my waist, taking a chunk of skin out of my side. I could feel the excruciating, stabbing pain take over my body. “Aahhhhh!” I screamed in pain and shock. I could smell the overwhelming metallic odor of my blood oozing out of me.

At that moment, the brown and white striped rogue got back up on it’s feet, and plunged towards me as I stood up. He knocked me hard onto the ground. I tried to push him off me but he had me pinned to the ground, and I was feeling weak from the bite on my waist. He started to snap at my neck, going for my jugular. I felt an unimaginable fear inside me at that moment. Was this it? Is this how I would die? No f#\$%ing way! I will fight to my last breath for my pups, I tell myself.

I punched the rogue in the throat as hard as I could, and used all my strength to push the rogue to the side, it started to choke, and took a moment to get it’s breath back then got ready to charge me again. The other rogue was circling me with a feral and satisfied look on it’s face.

I clutched at my side trying to place pressure on my wound. I could feel that I was losing too much blood. I started to feel dizzy. I could see the rogues smirking and mumbling something. I saw the red and white one lunge towards me, and just as it was opening its mouth to snap its teeth at my neck, I started to fall to the ground, and all I saw was darkness.

Aleksa POV

I woke up to the sound of machines beeping. I took a few deep breaths and I could smell bleach mixed with antiseptic. Where am I, I asked myself. I tried to open my eyes and everything felt so bright. And I felt so tired, so I gave up and faded back into sleep.

I could hear a faint voice calling out my name, multiple times. Then I smelt the faint scent of fresh pine, it was my favourite scent, as the forest was my favourite place. I started to open my eyes again and this time even though it was overwhelmingly bright, I succeeded in fully opening them.

I felt slight tingles on my hand, It must be static electricity from the bed and the machines I thought. Then I looked down. It was Kingston. He was holding my hand, sitting beside me, looking at me with what looked like relief on his face. I tried to speak but my mouth was so dry, I managed to croak out "water".

Kingston obliged and helped me with some water in a cup and a straw. I took a few sips initially, then I greedily took more. The thirst within me was intense. I felt like I hadn't had any water in days.

I tried again to speak, this time I was successful, although I had to cough in between words.

"Where am I?" I manage to say in between coughs, looking around confused. As I tried to sit up a bit, I was engulfed with pain, a stabbing pain at my waist. I grabbed it with my hand and I could feel a large dressing. I looked back up at Kingston.

"The rogues? But how did I get here?" I asked.

"I can explain, don't panic, you are safe Aleksa". Kingston reassures me. He then proceeds to tell me how I got here.

“I was out for a run in the woods, when I smelt rogues, I could sense danger, so I kept running until I saw you.” Kingston tells me.

“You were bleeding profusely, and the rogues appeared to be going in for the kill, so I took them both out, and then I rushed you here.” He tells me, with anger starting to radiate from his aura.

I look at him, I'm overcome with emotion, I feel so grateful to him, if he hadn't been out there, I would be dead. “Thank you, I don't know how I can ever repay you for this.” I say to him with a sincere look upon my face.

Then I realize I am here, but my pups are not, “Oh my goddess, Liam and Layla! Daycare! I was supposed to pick them up. I've got to go!” I say as I try to pull myself up in a hurry leading to my stitches bursting. I feel the blood start to rush out of my wound, the metallic smell overwhelming my senses. What on earth? I think to myself. I am a werewolf. Why have I not healed?

Kingston panics and calls the doctors in to tend to my wound, he holds pressure on it, until they arrive, then they start stitching my wound up again.

“You need to be more careful Aleksa, your wolf is not with you right now, your healing will be that of a human's healing right now”. He tells me.

He then goes on to tell me a healer came in earlier and said that my wolf was away, but would be back, that she just needed some time to heal.

“Liam and Layla, are here, at Rocky Mountain. So are Mason and Kaia, you have all been granted an exemption, you are here as my guests. They will be in shortly. I have mindlinked my Beta Asher to inform them that you are awake.” He says.

I sigh in relief. I am glad that my pups are close by and that I will get to see them. But I have so many questions. I look up at Kingston and I start to ask him “How long have I been out?”.

To which he replied, “Three days. You have been in a coma for the past three days.” He says with a sadness exuding from him.

I am shocked “Three days? How can that be? Why did I sleep so long?” I ask, starting to panic that I have worried my pups and friends for the past three days.

“Your wolf wasn’t with you to speed up the healing process, and your injuries were critical. But you’re awake now and your body is slowly repairing itself” Kingston exclaims.

Kingston looks at me as though there is something on his mind. “Tell me, Aleksa, what were you doing in that part of the forest alone at that time of day?”.

I look at him perplexed. “I was going for a run, I got lost, then I came across the rogues”. Remembering my encounter with them.

“You really shouldn’t be so careless in future, that part of the territory isn’t often utilized by our pack, although it is our territory we generally keep away from it. It borders on the forsaken territory.” He warns me.

“When you are recovered, we can show you the territorial boundaries, and explain it all a bit more. For now, I would advise you to keep to the main track or even the main road, if you are running in human form” he then pauses, looks at me and continues, “There is something I need to discuss with you but it can wait until you are out of hospital.” Kingston says.

At that moment, the door bursts open and Mason and Kaia walk in with two very energetic and happy children “Mommy!” They call to me in sync.

“Mommy, we missed you! They tell me. They are about to jump on me when they are pulled back by Mason and Kaia.

“Slow down there pups, we don’t want to hurt mommy now do we?” Kaia says to Liam and Layla.

They just look at me wide eyed. “Mommy is so happy to see you both. I have missed you so much while I was sleeping.” I tell them with tears ready to fall from my eyes.

We all chat for a while, and Kingston stays sitting next to me the whole time. I find it strange that he seems so protective of me, but at the same time, I really don’t want him to leave. Something about his scent keeps me calm and makes me feel safe. Two things I haven’t felt in a long time.

After about half an hour I am struggling to keep my eyes open. Mason and Kingston start to notice, and suggest it might be time for everyone to leave so that I can get some sleep. We all say goodbyes and I am able to hug my pups

goodbye gently. I thank Mason and Kaia for looking after them and promise I will be out tomorrow, to which Kingston looks at me doubtfully.

They all leave, but Kingston doesn't. "Are you not going to leave as well?" I ask him, struggling to fight against my heavy eyes. "I will wait for you to fall asleep, then I will leave to attend to some pack matters, close your eyes Aleksa, get some sleep" he says.

Then I lose my fight to stay awake and drift off to sleep.

I had been in hospital for a total of five days now, and the medical team were satisfied that I was medically stable, and I was able to leave this morning. To say I was excited was an understatement. I couldn't wait to get out of here, don't get me wrong it was a state of the art hospital, everything was so bright and white and clean, it was a simple room with a bed in the middle of the room connected with monitors and equipment, and a panel above the bed with oxygen and suction and various other switches and medical supplies. Beside me was a small bedside table with a jug of water and cup on it. To the left of me there was a door leading to an ensuite bathroom with a walk in shower and a gorgeous sink and vanity with a large mirror. It was well stocked with environmentally friendly sustainable products.

Everyone here was so professional, from the Nurses and Doctors to the healthcare assistants and kitchen staff that brought me my meals.

The food was first class. I don't think I have ever eaten so well. I mean I have always cooked healthy and tasty meals, it's just you notice it more when someone else is cooking for you and you are on the receiving end.

However, that all said. I missed my pups greatly, I had never been separated from them like this before, with the exception being when Lachlan threw me into the dungeon at Evergreen.

I was also worried that I had missed too many shifts at work, but being that Kingston owned the Tavern, he said he had told Sierra that I would be off for a week or so, so there was no pressure there, but I still felt guilty letting my new team down, especially since I had just recently started.

I just wanted to get back to my new life, which had barely just started. I had told myself that this was just a temporary setback and I wouldn't let it hold me back.

One thing I would definitely miss about being here was the daily visits from Kingston. I could look at his face all day. I felt butterflies just thinking about him. Drool.

I walked to the bathroom to have a quick shower. Mason would be in shortly as he was picking me up to take me back to the old log cabin.

When I walked out of the shower Kingston was waiting at my bedside for me. I was standing at the ensuite door with nothing but a towel on. I stood there shocked. I was not expecting anyone else to be in the room, or I would have changed in the bathroom.

I stood there with my mouth wide open, looking at Kingston, feeling uber anxious that he was seeing me this way.

He was sitting there with a smirk on his face, something flashing in his eyes, amber flecks, his wolf surfacing perhaps.

"I'm sorry I didn't realize anyone else was in here, I'll just grab my clothes and change, I won't be long" I say picking the outfit that had been left for me the other day up off my bed and darting for the bathroom.

Nice one Aleksa, I scold myself. My heart racing and my body responding to the gorgeous wolf sitting only meters away from where I was getting changed.

I quickly throw my black halter neck dress on and my black crossover sandals on and brush my hair in front of the mirror.

Once I feel I look acceptable I walk out of the bathroom to greet Kingston.

"Aleksa, you look beautiful, please sit, there is something I would like to discuss with you" Kingston says sitting on the chair next to my hospital bed, with what looks like lust in his eyes, trailing my every move.

Luna Aleksa's Escape Chapter 19

Aleksa POV

It's been a week since Kingston appeared at my doorstep, and I haven't seen him since that day. We are all settled into life in Denver, having been here a couple of weeks now. Liam and Layla are loving the daycare that they attend. The ladies who run it, and work there, are so kind and nurturing, the twins are really thriving there. They've even managed to make a few friends and have a few playdates. I've even made a few mom friends myself. We go for coffee on the weekend while the children play at the park. It's a far cry from our life at Evergreen, which was so much more isolated. I didn't have any mom friends. I mean I only had Eva and Kali, and look how Eva turned out. Kali is a keeper though, I sure miss her. I think of her often.

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Every day I count myself lucky that Lachlan hasn't found me or the twins, or my friends yet. We have no way of knowing where he is looking for us, although I imagine he would be looking high and low for Liam, being that he is the rightful heir to Evergreen Pack. I know the day will come when he finds us and we will have to fight for our freedom once again. All I can do right now is make sure we are ready when that time comes. Mason, Kaia and I have been working on multiple escape plans for the twins and I, and we are almost ready for when the time comes.

Today I have the day off work. I have dropped the twins off at daycare, and Mason and Kaia are both at work, so I don't know what to do with myself. I've been working a lot recently. Since we left Evergreen in such a hurry, we were unprepared. We had no savings or back up plans, so I've been working extra

shifts so that I can put some money inside for when we have to move on again.

I look around at the cabin, it's pretty immaculate so that rules cleaning out. I look in the pantry and it's looking a little empty so I guess I can go grocery shopping. Although I am feeling restless at the moment, so, I try to channel Amber to see if she would like to go for a run.

After a few attempts I hear no reply from her in my head, so I guess shifting is out of the question right now. I almost can't remember the last time we shifted. Amber has been so distant since everything that went down with Lachlan, I think she misses Cyrus, Lachlan's wolf. She has only spoken to me once since we escaped from Evergreen, and that was when we met Kingston.

A cheeky smile erupts on my face when I think of Kingston. Gosh he is divine. He's tall, he's tanned, he's muscular, he has a smile that just makes me want to melt. He has a commanding no nonsense type of aura about him. But then he's understanding and seems sincere. I feel so attracted to him. It's so unlike me. I'm not that girl that falls all over a guy. It's so bizarre, I should be mourning the death of my relationship with Lachlan, not getting all turned on but the hot alpha of the Rocky Mountain Pack. Get a grip Aleksa – I think to myself.

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I can't even feel Lachlan being intimate with someone anymore. Perhaps my rejecting our bond was enough? I thought that he needed to accept my rejection though. It's so confusing. Perhaps I needed to see someone, a witch or a healer or perhaps a shaman. I wouldn't even know where to start come to think of it. Perhaps I would discuss this with Kaia later on tonight and see what she thinks about it all.

Thinking about Kingston had gotten me all wound up. So I decided I would go for a run, and since Amber isn't talking to me I will just go in my human form. I look around my room to find something acceptable to run in.

I picked up some black leggings and a black sports bra and put them on. I grab the only pair of shoes I have that would be suitable, my black converse shoes, and pull my hair into a high ponytail.

I walk through the house, shut the door, run down the stairs and start stretching. I take a deep breath in of fresh air, and decide that this is exactly what I need. So I started jogging off into the woods to relieve myself of some s****I frustration.

I've been running for about forty five minutes now and I realize I am completely lost. I thought I was following a trail but clearly I went off track at some point. I'm not worried because I am a wolf and I love the woods. So I try to communicate with Amber but she's still not reachable. I slow down to walk a bit and take a look at my surroundings. If I could just find some sort of landmark, or listen for some sort of sound like running water or traffic or something.

I didn't bring anything with me so I can't keep track of the time. Although I don't have to pick up Liam and Layla until much later today so that doesn't concern me.

I start to backtrack hoping that I am going back in the right direction. After a few hours I stop. Great one Aleksa. Lost in the middle of nowhere, with no wolf to rely on. My stomach starts to growl and I wish that I had some breakfast before I left, or even a drink of water.

I decide that I will keep walking straight until I find the river or the road, or something resembling the right direction.

After some time passes, I get the feeling I am not alone. I can't hear anything but I can sense company is near.

I start regretting this bright idea I had to go for a run in the woods without my wolf. I hear a twig snap and I look behind me. I can smell them before I see them. Rogues. There appears to be two of them. They start to snarl at me. They both look pretty mangey, and they smell terrible like rotten meat. I would imagine it has been a while since they last showered. I am fighting the urge to vomit right now. My gag reflex is going strong. They slowly start to stalk towards me, both coming towards me, one from the right and one from the left.

I start to panic and try to wake Amber up, “Come on girl I could really use your help right now, we need to shift. Amber!!! Please! Rogues! I need to shift.” I yell at her desperately in my head.

“What’s a pretty she wolf doing out here all on her lonesome?” The brown one with white stripes all around its torso says to me.

“Looking for some fun, shewolf?” The other rogue says licking it’s licks and smirking at me, it is also brown, with red stripes over it’s back and belly.

“Uh, no thank you. I was just on my way back to.. My pack.” I say.

“Liar. You have no pack. You don’t smell like a rogue.” he sniffs the air near me. “You smell so sweet, and I can sense that you are ranked, but you don’t smell like a pack wolf”. The brown and white coloured rogue says matter of factly.

“That’s right so you better back off – NOW!” I say. Hoping that will make them think twice, but deep down inside knowing that it won’t. I am well aware that I am outnumbered and out wolfed.

“Hahaha. Nice try, she wolf. You are weak. Your wolf is not with you right now!” the brown and white rogue says with a sinister smile on it’s face.

I take a defensive stance, as I am well aware that these rogues want more than a chat from me, and I am resigned to the fact that I will have to defend myself in human form.

I only wish I was trained to defend myself. I never got a chance to train at Evergreen because I had gotten pregnant straight away and then I was constantly weak from the pain of Lachlan cheating. I had done a few self defense classes back in the human town I grew up in before meeting Lachlan but that was about it. Moon goddess please protect me! I prayed silently.

The brown and white coloured rogue lunged towards me, and I was able to move out of his way just in time, only to be pounced on by the brown and red striped rogue. He furiously bit into the side of my waist, taking a chunk of skin out of my side. I could feel the excruciating, stabbing pain take over my body. “Aahhhhh!” I screamed in pain and shock. I could smell the overwhelming metallic odor of my blood oozing out of me.

At that moment, the brown and white striped rogue got back up on its feet, and plunged towards me as I stood up. He knocked me hard onto the ground. I tried to push him off me but he had me pinned to the ground, and I was feeling weak from the bite on my waist. He started to snap at my neck, going for my jugular. I felt an unimaginable fear inside me at that moment. Was this it? Is this how I would die? No f#\$%ing way! I will fight to my last breath for my pups, I tell myself.

I punched the rogue in the throat as hard as I could, and used all my strength to push the rogue to the side, it started to choke, and took a moment to get its breath back then got ready to charge me again. The other rogue was circling me with a feral and satisfied look on its face.

I clutched at my side trying to place pressure on my wound. I could feel that I was losing too much blood. I started to feel dizzy. I could see the rogues smirking and mumbling something. I saw the red and white one lunge towards me, and just as it was opening its mouth to snap its teeth at my neck, I started to fall to the ground, and all I saw was darkness.

Aleksa POV

I woke up to the sound of machines beeping. I took a few deep breaths and I could smell bleach mixed with antiseptic. Where am I, I asked myself. I tried to open my eyes and everything felt so bright. And I felt so tired, so I gave up and faded back into sleep.

I could hear a faint voice calling out my name, multiple times. Then I smelt the faint scent of fresh pine, it was my favourite scent, as the forest was my favourite place. I started to open my eyes again and this time even though it was overwhelmingly bright, I succeeded in fully opening them.

I felt slight tingles on my hand, It must be static electricity from the bed and the machines I thought. Then I looked down. It was Kingston. He was holding my hand, sitting beside me, looking at me with what looked like relief on his face. I tried to speak but my mouth was so dry, I managed to croak out "water".

Kingston obliged and helped me with some water in a cup and a straw. I took a few sips initially, then I greedily took more. The thirst within me was intense. I felt like I hadn't had any water in days.

I tried again to speak, this time I was successful, although I had to cough in between words.

“Where am I?” I manage to say in between coughs, looking around confused. As I tried to sit up a bit, I was engulfed with pain, a stabbing pain at my waist. I grabbed it with my hand and I could feel a large dressing. I looked back up at Kingston.

“The rogues? But how did I get here?” I asked.

“I can explain, don’t panic, you are safe Aleksa”. Kingston reassures me. He then proceeds to tell me how I got here.

“I was out for a run in the woods, when I smelt rogues, I could sense danger, so I kept running until I saw you.” Kingston tells me.

“You were bleeding profusely, and the rogues appeared to be going in for the k**l, so I took them both out, and then I rushed you here.” He tells me, with anger starting to radiate from his aura.

I look at him, I’m overcome with emotion, I feel so grateful to him, if he hadn’t been out there, I would be dead. “Thank you, I don’t know how I can ever repay you for this.” I say to him with a sincere look upon my face.

Then I realize I am here, but my pups are not, “Oh my goddess, Liam and Layla! Daycare! I was supposed to pick them up. I’ve got to go!” I say as I try to pull myself up in a hurry leading to my stitches bursting. I feel the blood start to rush out of my wound, the metallic smell overwhelming my senses. What on earth? I think to myself. I am a werewolf. Why have I not healed?

Kingston panics and calls the doctors in to tend to my wound, he holds pressure on it, until they arrive, then they start stitching my wound up again.

“You need to be more careful Aleksa, your wolf is not with you right now, your healing will be that of a human’s healing right now”. He tells me.

He then goes on to tell me a healer came in earlier and said that my wolf was away, but would be back, that she just needed some time to heal.

“Liam and Layla, are here, at Rocky Mountain. So are Mason and Kaia, you have all been granted an exemption, you are here as my guests. They will be

in shortly. I have mindlinked my Beta Asher to inform them that you are awake.” He says.

I sigh in relief. I am glad that my pups are close by and that I will get to see them. But I have so many questions. I look up at Kingston and I start to ask him “How long have I been out?”.

To which he replied, “Three days. You have been in a coma for the past three days.” He says with a sadness exuding from him.

I am shocked “Three days? How can that be? Why did I sleep so long?” I ask, starting to panic that I have worried my pups and friends for the past three days.

“Your wolf wasn’t with you to speed up the healing process, and your injuries were critical. But you’re awake now and your body is slowly repairing itself” Kingston exclaims.

Kingston looks at me as though there is something on his mind. “Tell me, Aleksa, what were you doing in that part of the forest alone at that time of day?”.

I look at him perplexed. “I was going for a run, I got lost, then I came across the rogues”. Remembering my encounter with them.

“You really shouldn’t be so careless in future, that part of the territory isn’t often utilized by our pack, although it is our territory we generally keep away from it. It borders on the forsaken territory.” He warns me.

“When you are recovered, we can show you the territorial boundaries, and explain it all a bit more. For now, I would advise you to keep to the main track or even the main road, if you are running in human form” he then pauses, looks at me and continues, “There is something I need to discuss with you but it can wait until you are out of hospital.” Kingston says.

At that moment, the door bursts open and Mason and Kaia walk in with two very energetic and happy children “Mommy!” They call to me in sync.

“Mommy, we missed you! They tell me. They are about to jump on me when they are pulled back by Mason and Kaia.

“Slow down there pups, we don’t want to hurt mommy now do we?” Kaia says to Liam and Layla.

They just look at me wide eyed. “Mommy is so happy to see you both. I have missed you so much while I was sleeping.” I tell them with tears ready to fall from my eyes.

We all chat for a while, and Kingston stays sitting next to me the whole time. I find it strange that he seems so protective of me, but at the same time, I really don't want him to leave. Something about his scent keeps me calm and makes me feel safe. Two things I haven't felt in a long time.

After about half an hour I am struggling to keep my eyes open. Mason and Kingston start to notice, and suggest it might be time for everyone to leave so that I can get some sleep. We all say goodbyes and I am able to hug my pups goodbye gently. I thank Mason and Kaia for looking after them and promise I will be out tomorrow, to which Kingston looks at me doubtfully.

They all leave, but Kingston doesn't. “Are you not going to leave as well?” I ask him, struggling to fight against my heavy eyes. “I will wait for you to fall asleep, then I will leave to attend to some pack matters, close your eyes Aleksa, get some sleep” he says.

Then I lose my fight to stay awake and drift off to sleep.

I had been in hospital for a total of five days now, and the medical team were satisfied that I was medically stable, and I was able to leave this morning. To say I was excited was an understatement. I couldn't wait to get out of here, don't get me wrong it was a state of the art hospital, everything was so bright and white and clean, it was a simple room with a bed in the middle of the room connected with monitors and equipment, and a panel above the bed with oxygen and suction and various other switches and medical supplies. Beside me was a small bedside table with a jug of water and cup on it. To the left of me there was a door leading to an ensuite bathroom with a walk in shower and a gorgeous sink and vanity with a large mirror. It was well stocked with environmentally friendly sustainable products.

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However, that all said. I missed my pups greatly, I had never been separated from them like this before, with the exception being when Lachlan threw me into the dungeon at Evergreen.

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One thing I would definitely miss about being here was the daily visits from Kingston. I could look at his face all day. I felt butterflies just thinking about him. Drool.

I walked to the bathroom to have a quick shower. Mason would be in shortly as he was picking me up to take me back to the old log cabin.

When I walked out of the shower Kingston was waiting at my bedside for me. I was standing at the ensuite door with nothing but a towel on. I stood there shocked. I was not expecting anyone else to be in the room, or I would have changed in the bathroom.

I stood there with my mouth wide open, looking at Kingston, feeling uber anxious that he was seeing me this way.

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"I'm sorry I didn't realize anyone else was in here, I'll just grab my clothes and change, I won't be long" I say picking the outfit that had been left for me the other day up off my bed and darting for the bathroom.

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Once I feel I look acceptable I walk out of the bathroom to greet Kingston.

“Aleksa, you look beautiful, please sit, there is something I would like to discuss with you” Kingston says sitting on the chair next to my hospital bed, with what looks like lust in his eyes, trailing my every move.

Luna Aleksa’s Escape Chapter 20

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