

## Chapter 2: Betrayal

Eden’s POV

Scarlett?

But how could that be? She’d been gone for two years now. I squinted to make sure my eyes weren’t deceiving me. They weren’t. It was her, all right.

Anxiety washed over me. Questions swarmed in my head. What was going on? When had she come back? And why was she with Caleb? I stood, stunned, able to move. A knot grew in my stomach. It twisted and turned inside me. I had a very bad feeling about this.

I shook my head. No. I was just overreacting. There had to be a logical explanation. All I had to do was talk to them. They would explain everything. My half-sister would never...

But before I could ask them any questions, they sauntered over to the banquet entrance. They breezed through the security check and disappeared into the banquet tent. I weaved my way through the crowd to the entrance of the tent. Two warriors stopped me.

“Name?” they asked, blocking my entrance. It was standard protocol, for security. I peeked around the large guards and saw Caleb and Scarlett taking a seat at the banquet inside.

“Luna Eden,” I said hurriedly to the guards. Caleb tucked a strand of Scarlett’s hair behind her ear. She blushed and giggled. My stomach turned. *‘There’s a logical explanation,’* I reassured myself.

“LUNA Eden?” one of the guards asked, raising his eyebrows. “From which pack?”

“Sequoia Pack,” I told him. What was the hold up? I had to get inside.

“I don’t think so,” he responded, laughing.

“What do you mean?” I asked him. “I’m Luna Eden, mate of Alpha Caleb of the Sequoia Pack.” I didn’t understand why they were laughing, but their laughter was causing other people to look my way. I shrunk back, embarrassed by the scene.

“The Alpha and Luna from Sequoia have already entered the banquet.” His voice was loud, drawing even more attention from everyone around. I shook my head in disbelief.

“No, that’s not right,” I stammered. What was he saying? I shook my head in disbelief. People were starting to whisper. Inside, Caleb and Scarlett were sipping on champagne. She rubbed a drop of champagne from his chin with her thumb.

“Nice try,” the guard smirked. “Men, escort this imposter out of here.” He gave the command and two strong warriors came forward.

“Wait,” I muttered, confused and overwhelmed. “But I am Luna. There’s been some sort of mistake,” I said.

“Luna? You don’t even have a wolf!” the guard said, mocking me. People around me giggled and pointed. “You expect us to believe you’re a Luna?”

The warriors grabbed me by my arms and started dragging me away. There was no point in arguing. My cheeks flushed from embarrassment. Outside the venu, they shoved me and I fell to my knees, disoriented and confused.

“And don’t even think about coming back,” a warrior said, shaking his finger.

What had just happened? I’d been tossed out of the event! I stood up, brushed off my knees, and walked back to my packhouse, my head hung low in shame.

Back in my bedroom, I waited for Caleb to come home. The image of him and Scarlett swirled through my mind, haunting me. There had to be an explanation, I thought, looking out the window for Caleb. When it was well past midnight and took a deep breath and phoned him.

This time, he picked up.

“Caleb, I need to talk to you,” I said softly. “I was thrown out of the banquet. I....” but his sharp words cut me off.

“I’m at the hospital. I won’t be coming home tonight.”

Click. He hung up.

The hospital? Was he hurt? Had there been some sort of accident at the banquet? I had to be with him. That was the only thought that raced through my mind as I ran through the night in a frenzy.

I arrived at the hospital out of breath. Where was he? I walked quickly down the corridor, peeking into rooms, my heart pounding in my chest.

Half way down, I heard his voice. I stopped at the doorway. But before I went in, I heard another voice. A woman’s giggle.

I knew that voice. But it couldn’t be. Frightened at what I might see, I peeked around the corner of the door. Sure enough, Scarlett was on the hospital bed. Caleb was perched on the bed beside her, affectionately dabbing her forehead with a damp washcloth. I snapped my head back and stood against the wall. They hadn’t seen me.

I listened. Even though I lacked a wolf, I still had really sharp hearing. Their words filtered through the doorway, and my heart shattered into a million pieces.

“I had to marry her,” Caleb said. “I was preparing to take over the pack, but you know the rules. A werewolf Alpha must be married to take over the pack. For the pack’s stability. The pack needs both a Luna and an Alpha to manage the pack jointly. What was I supposed to do?”

“You could have waited for me, my love,” Scarlett replied.

My love? Tears welled in my eyes. I didn’t want to hear this, but I couldn’t stop listening.

“Scarlett, you disappeared!” Caleb’s voice was so soft and tender. “Without any warning. You just vanished. I NEVER would have married Eden if you hadn’t left. You must know that.”

I tried to blink back the tears, but they spilled out. I began to shake. NEVER would have married me? And just when I thought it couldn’t get any worse, it did.

“Well, Eden is useless.” Scarlett’s tone was mocking. “She doesn’t even have a wolf? How is she supposed to bear an heir for you?”

Her words were like daggers to my heart. I’ve always been so ashamed of not having a wolf. Hearing her mock me for it, my own half-sister, it stung worse than a thousand bee stings.

However, her next words made my stomach sink.