

Chapter 3: Rejection

Eden’s POV

“You can end the marriage now. I’m back,” Scarlett said. “And unlike her, I have my wolf. A strong one. I’ll give you children, Caleb. Lots of little wolf pups. True heirs. Unless you want her to have your children.”

“As if I would ever let Eden have MY children!” Caleb scoffed. “She’s the daughter of a traitor! I can’t let a traitor’s daughter give birth to my bloodline!”

Scarlett giggled at his cruel words, and I was shocked. He was my husband! How could he be so cruel? He smeared my mom's name, calling her a traitor!

I had to stop them! I didn’t want to hear any more of this. But just as I was about to rush out, I heard their continued conversation.

“So, dear, why did you suddenly leave me?” Caleb coaxed. His voice was so gentle. He never talked to me that way. “It’s okay, darling. You can tell me.”

“I was poisoned by wolfsbane. It was awful, pure torture. I wasn’t even conscious! My parents sent me to the Solace Pack since they’re the strongest pack in werewolf medical treatment. I suffered for so long.” I could hear her sobbing all the way through the door. “It was months before I regained consciousness, and when I did, well, I heard that you had married Eden.”

“Who did this to you?” Caleb asked, anger in his voice.

“My maid told me it was Eden. She was jealous of our love and wanted to be Luna, so she poisoned me.”

What? I gasped in shock. I did no such thing. I would NEVER poison someone, let alone my own half-sister.

“I didn't poison you!” I couldn't help but rush in and retorted.

They were both shocked to see me. They exchanged glances as if to say 'how much did she hear?' So, I made it clear.

“I heard everything,” I said, lifting my chin. I thought they would be embarrassed by this, but they looked at me with indignation. I realized then — they were planning to be together and they didn’t even care if I knew about their affair.

“Don't act innocent anymore, Eden,” Scarlett said, reaching for Caleb's hand. “If it weren't for you poisoning me two years ago, I wouldn't have collapsed at the banquet today. Wolfsbane messed up my body, and you stole my love! Today, I'm gonna uncover your scheme and make sure you can't fool Caleb anymore!”

“No! You're the one fool Caleb! I—” I struggled to defend myself, but when I saw Caleb tightly holding Scarlett's shoulders, looking at me with indifference, it felt like my heart was being squeezed by an invisible hand. Tears welled up unexpectedly.

“Your mom was a traitor, and you've got her blood, you're born to trick!” Scarlett seemed pleased with my tears, her smug expression and sharp accusations stabbing at me.

Anger rose in me. How dare she say those things. Before I knew what I was doing, I lunged at Scarlett and slapped her hard across the face.

Scarlett gasped, covering her cheek. Her body swayed slightly, as if she might fall. Caleb quickly caught her waist. So romantic. But it pained me so much. Tears flooded out like a broken dam.

Suddenly, Caleb grabbed me by my throat. His hands were strong and I gasped for air. He forced me to my knees.

“Apologize,” he said. It was the Alpha's command, and I couldn’t defy it.

“I-I’m sorry.” I reluctantly stuttered, unsure of which hurt more, my heart or my neck.

As he released me, I persisted in clearing my mother’s and my name, “My mother isn’t a traitor, and I haven’t lied to you, Caleb. I didn’t poison anyone!”

“Your hitting me in front of Caleb is the best proof. You've been faking it all along,” Scarlett interrupted, snuggling closer to Caleb, coaxing him, “How can such a morally flawed she-wolf become your Luna, Caleb.”

“No! Caleb, we’ve been together for two years, as your Luna—”

“Not anymore,” Caleb said coldly.

What? A bad feeling spread in my heart.

Caleb looked at me disdainfully. His voice carried obvious anger and dissatisfaction, “Scarlett's right. If it weren’t for your family, I’d never marry a wolfless girl like you. Such a malicious she-wolf doesn't deserve to be the Luna of my Pack!”

There's no greater pain than being misunderstood by the one you love. I froze, my mind went blank, feeling ice-cold all over. No, please don’t say that, don’t.

But Caleb had already made up his mind. He towered over me and said:

“I, Caleb, Alpha of the Sequoia Pack, reject you Eden, as my Luna.”

“No! Caleb, please, don’t do this,” I begged him on my knees. He looked down at me, with disgust in his eyes.

“A werewolf without a wolf is a shame to the pack. I’m declaring you exiled!” Caleb added to my punishment, using his usual cold tone towards me.

My heart shattered completely. Tears blurred my vision, and I could hardly see anything.

“Please, no,” I begged.

“Warriors!” he roared impatiently.

In an instant, several burly barged in, ignoring my struggles and cries as they dragged me out of the pack hospital. Just as Scarlett and Caleb were about to vanish from my sight, I saw they kissed.

“No! —” I desperately grabbed onto the warriors’ sleeves as they dragged me towards the pack border, trying to escape the impending fate. But they callously tossed me beyond the pack's boundaries.

“Shut up,” one of the warriors snapped at me, their fierce gaze making me flinch.

“You’re expelled, Eden, by the Alpha’s command. Never step foot inside our pack’s boundary again, or we’ll kill you on sight,” the leader of the warriors declared coldly, his words dripping with threat.

I watched them march away, wiping the dirt off my face. Then I stood up, on shaky legs. It was nighttime and the forest was dark. I no longer had the pack’s protection. I was a helpless rogue, vulnerable to anything and anyone.

I cautiously stepped into the forest, wary of every shadow and sound. This was rogue territory, a realm where darkness and violence reigned supreme. As a fragile soul without the protection of a pack, every moment here felt perilous.

The moon cast its silvery glow through the tangled branches above, illuminating my path as I leaned against a sturdy tree. A chill wind swept through the air, sending shivers down my spine and prickling my skin with fear. This, undoubtedly, was the darkest day of my existence — abandoned by my husband, betrayed by my half-sister, and cast out by my pack.

Tears welled up in my eyes, but I dared not let them fall. To display vulnerability in this unforgiving forest of crisis was to invite danger. Mom... How different would my life be if you were still with me? Would I still have the strength to clear your name from shame?

“Just survive the night,” I told myself.

A branch snapped and I held my breath. I know many rogues roamed this forest, and they wouldn’t hesitate to kidnap me...or worse.

Suddenly, a howl broke through my thoughts. It ripped through the air.

It was the most terrifying, wildest, loudest howl I had ever heard in my life.

It was a wolf’s howl. Scared, I quickly looked around.

That’s when I saw it. Two eyes, shining in the night. Wolf eyes.

And they were locked on me.