

Chapter 6

The Alpha's Mate Who Cried Wolf

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It's around 1am when we arrive at Shadow Crest. I wake up to Ryker carrying me in his arms; it's dark and quiet.

'Ryker, I can walk, you know?'

'I know, but I want to carry you,' he says, with a grin.

'Put me down, Ryker.' He gently puts me down.

We are at the front entrance of a mansion; it's three storeys high. Facing the front door, a big white staircase ascends to the second floor. The balconies on the second and third floors are to die for, and I really love the white French doors and windows. The house is bordered in manicured green hedges, and flowers grace the garden sweetly. A big water fountain sculpted in the shape of two wolves is a serious outdoor focal point.

'This is where we live; this is the pack house,' Ryker says, proudly.

'It's really big house for just two people,' I say.

'Oh, actually, a bunch of us live in this house.'

Ryker scratches the back of his head nervously.

‘You never said I’d be living in a house with a bunch of werewolves,’ I say.

‘It’s normal for the Alpha and Luna to live in the pack house with the beta, gamma, omega, the cook. Guests from other packs come and visit too,’ he explains.

‘How can I stay with a bunch of werewolves I don’t even know?’ I ask, crossing my arms.

‘Astrid, no one here is going to harm you. In fact, you being here will bring a lot of excitement to Shadow Crest. I

know it’s a big adjustment, but please give it a few days and we will talk about it if you’re still uncomfortable,’ Ryker says.

Sighing, I say, ‘Okay, fine.’ Ryker opens the front door. Seth is behind us.

‘Well, I’m going to jump into bed with my mate. I look forward to you meeting her after your rest Luna,’ he smiles.

‘I prefer Astrid, for now,’ I mumble. Seth and Ryker exchange their thoughts on that with a look behind my shoulder, before he leaves and goes to his room.

‘Come. Our room is on the top floor,’ Ryker says, as I follow him upstairs.

‘Wait. Our room? Don’t I get my own room for now?’ Ryker pauses, and after a moment in thought, he nods.

‘Your room for now will be the room beside mine.’

‘Okay,’ I nod.

We make our way to the top floor. This place is huge; there are so many rooms and hallways.

‘This is where I sleep,’ Ryker says, opening a large door. It’s a very large room with a king-sized bed, and walk-in

wardrobes either side. The windows are the largest I’ve ever seen in a house. I look forward to seeing what the view

during daylight is like.

Ryker motions for me to go to follow him into the room beside his.

‘This room is your room. You have a walk-in wardrobe, a bathroom, king-sized bed, balcony, and in the corner here, a

nice comfy couch,’ he says. It’s a beautiful room; only slightly smaller than his.

‘Make yourself comfortable. Make this your home. When you wake up, there will be fresh towels in the bathroom,

and I’ll ask Seth to see if his mate, Mia, can loan you something to wear. When you’re ready for breakfast, wait for me so

we can go down together. Then I’ll take you shopping for clothes and you can meet some locals,’ Ryker smiles.

‘Okay, thank you,’ I say, appreciatively.

‘Before I go. You’ve been through a lot tonight. Will you be okay on your own? I know you aren't comfortable sharing a bed just yet, but I can sleep on the couch here, if you want me to,’ he offers. I think about it for a moment.

‘I think I’ll be okay, Ryker.’ He nods and leaves, closing the door behind him. I let out a yawn, and walk over to the bed; it’s so fancy and pretty and looks expensive. I eye the couch for a moment and curl up on it with a wrap and fall asleep within minutes.

I look at the clock on the wall. It’s just after 7am. I sit up and rub my eyes and remember everything from the night before. The diner last night. Dad. It isn't a dream.

I open the bathroom door; it’s just as glamorous as the bedroom. The marble sink and the granite floor, the gold taps; the chicness of it all. I run a bath and, in a cupboard, find many soaps, bubble baths and lotions. This is every girl’s dream. Taking one of the bubble baths, I squirt it into the bath water, and place a body wash and shampoo on the side of the bathtub. I remove my dirty hoodie and jeans; I’m just about to discard my bra when there’s a knock at the door.

‘Who is it?’ I ask.

‘Hello, Luna. It's me. Mia! Alpha Ryker said you need something to wear. I brought you one of my dresses; it's going to be warm today,’ she says, loudly and excitedly.

‘Okay. Let me unlock the door.’ I open the door to see a very sweet-faced, blue-eyed girl with brown, shoulderlength hair, around my height, and only a little older than me. I'm guessing no older than nineteen. Her face lights up with the biggest smile, before it changes into a look of horror.

‘Luna! What happened to you? There are bruises everywhere!’ She says, dropping the dress, and covering her mouth with her hands in shock. I look down at all the bruising and swelling, in my black underwear and bra. Ashamed, I hug myself and look away.

‘Mia, just leave the dress, and go please,’ I say.

‘But Luna!’ She says, before I shut the door and lean against it so nobody can enter. I cry. ‘Just leave the dress there, and go, Mia!’ I say, trying not to let her hear me cry.

The bath is about to overflow; I run to it and quickly turn the taps off. I remove my bra and underwear. I lower myself

into the water; my whole body stings. I rub the body wash all down my arms and legs, and shampoo my long brown wavy hair.

After the bath, I dry myself off. I find a neatly-folded, maroon-coloured dress with a bra, some underwear and slip-on shoes. The short-sleeved dress sits just above my knee, hiding some bruises. The sweetheart neckline unfortunately doesn't hide much.

I find a brush behind the mirror door, and eye my reflection: my green eyes, small nose and pink lips. The bruising around my eye has gone down a lot thankfully. I apply a small bit of foundation I find, to hide what remains of the bruising.

Ryker and Seth are talking just outside my room. 'You know this isn't going to go down well with Alice,' Seth says.

'I know, but I have my mate now so things have changed.' I open the door; they go silent and smile at me.

'Luna, that dress is very flattering on you,' Seth smiles.

'Thank you,' I smile. Ryker walks over to me.

'You look beautiful, Astrid,' Ryker says; his face lights up with a big smile.

‘I'm so hungry,’ I announce.

‘Well, you're about to meet Alice downstairs. She's the cook,’ Ryker says.

Ryker insists on holding my hand down the stairs in case I fall. I know it's just because he just wants to be close to me, and enjoys our closeness just as much as I do.

We enter the dining room; a plate smashes to the ground.

‘What is the meaning of this?’ The older lady asks, staring at our hands.

Everyone stands at the table as we walk in.

‘Alice,’ Mia says, ‘the special guest I was telling you about, is actually our Luna. Can you believe Ryker finally found his mate?’ Mia says in a bubbly and chirpy tone. Alice looks at me and glares.

‘Now that you've met Astrid, your Luna, you can now finish serving breakfast,’ Ryker says, smiling at me. Alice huffs off back to the kitchen. What's her problem?

Taking my seat at the table, Ryker sits next to me. Seth sits beside Mia and kisses her forehead.

‘Astrid, you already know Seth and Mia. This is Gamma Kane and his mate Hayley.

‘It's a pleasure to finally meet you,’ Hayley says.

‘Luna,’ Kane says, bowing gentlemanly.

‘Nice to meet you. Is Alice always this grumpy?’ I ask. Everyone laughs.

‘Actually, yeah. She can be a bit full on at times but just ignore her.’ Hayley smiles.

‘Oh ok.’ I reply.

Alice comes out from the kitchen carrying a stack of pancakes while glaring at Ryker, and plonks them down onto the table; Ryker follows her into the kitchen.

‘Excuse me, Astrid, I need to get myself some water.’ Moments later we hear them arguing.

‘Is everything okay?’ I ask. Everyone passes knowing looks across the table.

‘I’m sure everything is fine, Luna,’ Hayley says, giving me a reassuring smile.

‘So, you’ll be eighteen soon?’ Mia says.

‘Yes, in nine days,’ I smile.

‘How exciting! You must be excited to meet your wolf?’ She asks.

Ryker said something about shifting into a wolf on my eighteenth. I’m going to turn into a wolf. I don’t want to shift.

I don’t want to meet my wolf. What if I hurt someone or kill again? I can’t repeat what happened to mum.

My chest suddenly feels heavy; I start hyperventilating.

‘Luna, are you okay?’ Mia and Hayley ask. With teary eyes, I stand.

‘I’m sorry. I can’t do this! I can’t be here!’ I run out of the dining room and down the hall until I find the front door. I

run down the street and just keep running, with no idea where I'm heading.

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