

The Ivory Queen by StephanieLight Chapter 7

7. Escape

Aurora's POV

I'm crying on the ground, curled up in a ball. I feel blood dripping down the side of my face and my stomach is on fire. Erin stands over me, kicking me over and over again.

Please, no more," I plead.

Suddenly, Erin stops. I lower my hands and look up. The blood from my face drains as I watch Erin kiss Oliver, shoving her tongue down his throat. She turns to look at me, a wicked smile on her face while Oliver trails kisses down her neck.

"How could I possibly love you?" Oliver asks me.

I wake up in a cold sweat. I scan the hospital room and am relieved to find that I am alone. I jump out of bed, pulling the last remaining IV tube out of me and unplugging the heart monitor.

Where are you going? My wolf asks.

I'm leaving, I respond. Oliver and Erin are together. I was stupid to even think for a second that Oliver could ever care about me.

It was a dream! Reyna howls.

Was it a dream when he kissed her that night?

He didn't kiss her!

Doesn't matter, Erin lives at the River Moon pack house. What do you think will happen when Oliver takes me there? I'm not sticking around to find out.

My wolf is silent, understanding my fear.

I run to the door and lock it from the inside and begin to search the room. In a cabinet next to my bed, I find Oliver's overnight bag and a large pink bag. I open the pink bag and discover a new pack of underwear, a few t-shirts, three pairs of jeans, a black hoodie, socks,

and a pair of black converse.

Oliver must be planning on me taking me home soon.

I search the black bag, hoping to find cash or something of value but just find men's clothes. I toss it aside. I place the pink on the bed and quickly change into a fresh pair of underwear, jeans, t-shirt and shoes. While I'm changing, I realize I can almost count all the ribs

of my rib cage from how much weight I've lost. There's also a perfectly healed long pink scar on my abdomen. I go to the bathroom and pull my long black hair into a bun. My reflection shocks me when I see my bruises are gone. I almost look like a normal teenager, except

for the fact that I'm extremely underweight.

Now how do I get out of here without them noticing?

I glance at the window and rush to it. I'm pleased to see I'm on the first floor. The only thing separating me from freedom is a thin window screen. I search the medical cabinets to find a scalpel and proceed to cut the screen out. Stuffing the scalpel in my bag, I climb

out through the hole I cut and run.

I sprint along the long narrow road connecting the pack hospital to the main street. The road cut through thick woods. Looking at both ends of the road, I'm unsure which way to go. I've never been on River Moon territory before and have no idea where I am. One way could take me to the city and sweet freedom but the other could take me right to the River Moon houses and main pack house. Not wanting to panic, I quickly put my mind to work.

River Moon is to the east of Lluvia Blanca. That must mean Desert Sky and the city are to the South...

I look up at the sky and find the sun dimming in the horizon. Situating myself, I start running down the main road. After a while, see head lights coming towards me in the distance and run into the woods to hide from it.

That was too close! I think as the car zooms past me. I'm going to have to be more careful.

I decide to keep running in the woods alongside the road to keep me hidden from any cars coming by. I run for about an hour before my burning lungs force me to stop. It's dark when I reach the pack border and see the guard post house beside the main gate.

Two

guards sit inside, both on high alert.

f**k, there's probably guards posted along the entire border of the territory. How am I supposed to get past those two?

Well you tried. No shame in turning back and being with our mate!

Reyna chuckles.

No, I can't go back there.

So what do you plan on doing? If you don't go through the road, you'll have to cross over into Desert Sky territory and that's a death sentence.

I block Reyna out and I settle under a large oak tree, pulling out my hoodie and slipping it on.

When I was younger, there was a large oak tree next to our house. Dad and I would spend hours climbing its many branches and telling stories to each other. He would tell me stories of his home in Mexico and of his older brother, Mateo.

*FLASH BACK

"Papi, what was Mexico like?" I asked, swinging my feet happily.

"Oh, it was beautiful, mija! We had a house by the beach and every night, Mateo and I would sit on the roof and watch the sun go down and wait for the moon and stars to come out. There was a little hidden cave on the beach, so Mateo and I would spend all day exploring it. Sometimes if I close my eyes, I can still feel the warm sand on my feet and hear waves crash against the cliffs. Your abuelita would be furious with us when we'd come back with some serious tans!" He chuckles.

"Why did you leave?"

There was a long pause before he answered.

"When your uncle died, I-I was too sad. I had heard that several Mexican packs had migrated and settled north so your mother and packed our things and left. There was nothing keeping me there."

“Do you miss it?”

“All the time.” There was a sadness in his voice.

“Papi, I want to go to Mexico! I want to see the cave and the beach! Will you take me?”

“One day, when you’re much older, I’ll take you.”

“Pinky swear?” I say holding out my pinky to him.

“I pinky swear, mija.”

*END FLASHBACK

I wipe my tears, remembering Dad’s promise to me.

“I’m going home, Papi” I whisper to myself. “I promise,” kissing my pinky.

I get to my feet, throwing my bag over my shoulder. I run deeper into the woods while staying close to the border. About a quarter mile into my run, I catch the scent of more guards in the distance.

s**t if I can smell them, they can smell me.

I make a run for the border and hear snarling in the distance. I start sprinting when I hear one of them howl, alerting the others.

Branches snap behind me before I finally step over the border. I turn back to see a grey wolf standing at the edge of the border, looking at me with clear concern in his eyes. He barks at me, almost like he’s urging me to come back.

He won’t cross the border...

I shake my head at him and he starts to howl. Several wolves arrive, all of them stopping at the border and barking at me.

Stop wasting time standing here! Get moving! This is Desert Sky territory so unless you want to start a war, run!

Reyna snaps.

Isprint, heading back towards the main road. My lungs feel like they are about to burst but I keep running, too afraid to stop. I’m

extremely grateful that I somehow managed to evade all of the Desert Sky guards. After 20 minutes, I’m relieved to hear the bustling city.

I slow down to catch my breath and start walking until I emerge in what appears to be a park. I see several couples walk by, holding hands and chattering away. They look at me with disgust and walk away faster.

What’s their problem?

I start walking to a bench nearby and sit down, taking in the view. I glance around and see several restaurants, hotels, sky scrapers, and other buildings just on the edge of the park. Exhausted, I stretch myself on the bench and look up at the night sky.

Aurora, what are we doing? What is your plan?

I don’t know...

Let’s go home...

We don’t have a home!

I sit up and start thinking of my next move. I made it to the city but I’m starving and have no place to stay for the night. I need money.

You’d be a terrible pick pocket sweetie . Reyna laughs. Your conscience would eat at you.

I sigh. Maybe I can perform something?

You have no talent. At least not the entertaining kind.

Then I'll just beg!

I look around and groan when I realize this is a very affluent area. There's no way these snobs would ever give me spare change.

Maybe I could hitch hike my way out of here.

Ah yes! Let's get murdered! Reyna sneers.

I want to cry, I have no idea what I am doing. My stomach starts growling. I look around and see a water fountain nearby and drink until my stomach is full.

You can't live off of water forever...

I block Reyna out and find a restroom. I stare back at my reflection and realize I look crazy. There are sticks in my hair and I'm covered in dirt and leaves. I quickly clean myself up, dusting off the dirt and redoing my bun. I slip off my shoes and wipe the mud off with some paper towels. Once I look presentable again, I slip out of the bathroom and make my way out of the park.

I'm in awe of the city, taking in the incredible Halloween decorations. I hardly ever came to the city when I was younger. My father

thought it was too dangerous for me and Mia. I went to school at the Lluvia Blanca elementary and middle school. When I did my brief

stint in high school, I took a bus to an all werewolves school in the outskirts of the city, Oakridge High, so I never really explored the city.

After that, I was pretty much a prisoner of Lluvia Blanca.

After a bit of walking, I ask someone for directions to the local Greyhound station and make my way over there. I look at the bus schedules posted on the wall and search for bus to San Diego. My heart shatters when I realize how expensive the tickets are.

Aurora what is the plan? Reyna sighs.

I glance at the large clock on the wall. It's almost 8 pm. I ask someone walking by for directions to Oakridge.

Why are we going back to school?

Because it's frankly the only place I know in the city and I have a secret place where I used to hide from everyone during lunch.

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I walk about two miles east and end up at the school. Several memories come flooding back and I quickly push them away. Except for an old security guard, I'm relieved to find the school campus empty. I easily slip past security and run past the administration building. Turning a couple corners I manage to find the old abandoned snack shack by the portables. I become excited as I crawl through the hole I once made to escape the torture of my classmates.

It hasn't changed a bit.

My old beanbag is still sitting in the corner and the books I snuck in were still piled neatly against the wall. The shack had been abandoned years before I first found it and I cleaned it up to build my own little sanctuary. I used to eat lunch in here and hide out during free period.

I plop myself on the bean bag, causing a cloud of dust to rise into the air. I cough as I accidentally inhale some of the particles. I set the bag down and flick off my shoes before curling up and falling asleep.

I wake up in a rush realizing I actually slept in later than I had wanted to. Unfortunately, the bean bag was as comfortable as a sack of potatoes and I ended up spending most of the night tossing and turning. I only got some shut eye after exhausting myself by doing jumping jacks. I quickly change into a fresh pair of jeans, a clean shirt and my hoodie before slipping my shoes back on. As I crawl out of the hole and make a run for it, misfortune slaps me right across the face as I run straight into two Lluvia Blanca kids. The blood drains from my face as I recognize them as Carlos and Adolfo. They were friends of Mia and they did not like me.

“Aurora?” Carlos asks in disbelief. “What the f**k are you doing here? I thought you were dead...”

“N-Nothing, I was just leaving. Please don’t – don’t tell anyone I was here. Please. I’m begging you,” I cry.

“Not a f*****g chance, b***h. We don’t owe you any favors,” Adolfo snickers, before grabbing me by the wrists and dragging me around the corner to the middle of the court yard in full view of the entire school.

“Hey guys? Look what the cat dragged in!” Adolfo shouts before throwing me to ground along with my bag.

I pull the bag frantically to my chest and hug it as several students gawk and stare at me. Given by the number of students present, I’d say it was break time.

Suddenly one of the River Moon kids comes storming over and throws a punch at Adolfo. Carlos tries to retaliate but the kid catches his fist and pushes him back. Several more River Moon wolves follow and before I know it, a war between River Moon and Lluvia Blanca ignites in front of me.

Shit, what did I just do?

As the fight intensifies, I feel two arms grab me from behind and drag me out of harm’s way. I want to s****m, but my fear silences me.

“Are you ok?” someone asks.

“Please don’t hurt me!” I plead, shielding my head with my arms.

“We’re not going to hurt you. Are you kidding me? Alpha would kill us if we touched you,” another one says, extending out her hand.

I stare at it like an i***t and she rolls her eyes and sighs with annoyance.

“My name is Chloe,” she says. “That’s Natalie. We’re from River Moon. Now will you stand up or are you going to sit there on your ass all day and get us all in trouble?”

I take her hand and she helps me to my feet. Natalie pulls out her phone and starts typing furiously. Suddenly, the principle and several teachers come running out to stop the fight. Kids start to flee and chaos ensues. Chloe and Natalie pull me into a nearby bathroom to wait until the coast is clear.

“You know for a Luna, you sure like to cause a lot of trouble,” Chloe mumbles.

I stare at her in confusion.

She rolls her eyes again. “Last night the entire pack was on lock down. No one could go

in or out until we found you. Alpha sent search parties to look for you all night. Guess no one thought to check the school," she shrugs. "It's kind of genius now that I think about it."

Much to my embarrassment, my stomach starts growling and they both stare at me.

"Oh s**t, have you eaten anything?" Natalie asks, rummaging through her bag.

I shake my head and grab my stomach. It growls louder and I pray for it to shut up as I remember how furious Mom would get whenever she heard my stomach rumble.

"Here," Natalie says, handing me a granola bar. "Sorry, it's all I have."

I take it, trying my best to unwrap it slowly so as not to look desperate. After I finish it, Natalie's phone dings and she goes up to the door and checks the hall way. Seeing the coast is clear, she motions us to follow her and we make a dash for the school parking lot.

Suddenly the smell of honey and green apples fills my nostrils and my wolf wakes up.