

## Chapter 5- New Life

### Melissa's Pov

Today was the day.

I was actually going to be sent away with a stranger for the rest of my life, and I probably won't be able to find my mate.

I had a plan. I was going to leave in the night two days ago and run away to start a new life and search for my mate. But after what Toya told me, I simply couldn't leave.

I tried; I really did. I packed my bags and left at eleven-thirty that night. I ran as fast as I could in wolf form to the border, where I knew no border patrol stayed. It was the spot of the very same stream where Toya said my parents had disappeared.

When I gazed at the stream through my wolf eyes, I couldn't help but think about my brother. Did he really once love me for two whole years? There was just a nagging thought that Logan actually loved me. It troubled me greatly. It had me thinking if there was any love left in him.

It was stupid of me to turn back when I was so close to my freedom, only for my brother, who was a lost hope. I could see it in the way he stared that he

loathed me. So, why couldn't I just turn my back and leave?

I had no idea. But I chose to stay-to try and talk to him and get something out of him. I had no idea what I expected, but all I got was disappointment. When I tried to speak to him, he shunned me, and my plans of running away went through the gates the same night I turned back. A pack member spotted me near the border and sent my uncle a message through their mind link.

Since then, he had upped security, so my second plan was running away when I got to this new pack-a new home, perhaps.

The thought made me shiver. If only I hadn't taken what Toya said too personally. I could actually be on my way to the north or, better yet, lying in a motel somewhere. My brother would never change, and I should've known that. But it was my stupid hope that my ten-year-old brother was still in there somewhere that made me turn back, and now, I was trapped.

I sat at the top of the stairs with my suitcases packed behind me, waiting as my brother and uncle talked. From what I heard with my heightened hearing, Alpha Lukas was past the pack borders and on his way to the Alpha house now.

I was anxious. I had no idea what to expect. Was he as

harsh as he sounded? Was he handsome? What if I won't be able to run away after this, and I'd actually have to live with him? Will I be able to bear him?

This made me want to meet him even more to have a quick judgement of him, but at the same time, I didn't want to. I still considered jumping through my window and making a run for it. But I'd have to actually kill innocent border patrol men to get passed, and I wasn't selfish to that point, nor have I killed anyone, and I don't intend to start.

I tried to wrap my mind around this new life I had put myself in, but the more I thought, the harder it became.

At last, the bell on our door rang, and an unfamiliar scent lingered in the air faintly. I could smell the power radiating from this Lukas guy already, and he was only outside. From the top of the stairs, I watched as my brother and uncle rushed to the door, standing tall as they pulled it open.

I couldn't see his face yet, but I could see that he was tall-really tall. He towered over my uncle and brother, and both of them were six feet. He also had toned arms. I could see it when he shook Logan and Lance's hands.

They stepped aside to let him in, and I keenly observed the way he was dressed. His attire

screamed business, and that's when I was reminded that I was a pawn in a business transaction.

As if he could hear my thoughts or probably smell me, Lukas's eyes found mine at the top of the stairs, even though we were separated by bars. He squinted them for a second before his evidently pink lips pulled in a smile.

I watched as he raised his hand and used his index finger to call me. Lance and Logan watched his movement as I stood tall, and Logan's face fell in annoyance as I descended the stairs.

"This nosy brat. Leave, Melissa. We are discussing business," my brother spat.

I hung my head with a slight nod as I turned on my heels to leave, but as quick as I turned, a hand grabbed my arm. Surprisingly, his touch was gentle.

"Excuse me, Beta Logan. But I was to the one who called this... nosy brat, as you put it. I'd actually like to meet her and know her real and proper name," Lukas said. His voice was soft and almost silky. His words were slurred but just in the right way to make him sound stern yet casual.

My breath hitched as he slowly spun me around, and from the corner of my eyes, I caught my brother's heated, embarrassed gaze. I almost felt sorry for him, but then I met eyes with Lukas, and my heart stopped.

I have heard stories about the Dalton brothers. I heard that they were strong, mean and handsome. But handsome was definitely an understatement. I was staring at the very epitome of gorgeous.

His grey, beady eyes studied me carefully, and his lean, chiselled jaw ticked once as he too examined me. His hair was dark brown and unlevelled from all the wind that might've gone through it on his drive here, and his Adam's apple bobbed up and down slowly as he eyed me.

I had to incline my head to look at him. Just as I thought, my 5'4 height was nothing compared to him. Yet, though he was so handsome, I had no idea what he was like. He might've only been acting kind around my uncle and brother because he had no idea of the relationship we shared. But what will he be like behind closed doors?

"I'm Lukas," he said softly. "And you are?"

"Um..." For a while, I had no recollection of my own name. "Mel- Melissa Alexus, Alpha Lukas. Good to meet you."

"Are you?" he questioned. "I would imagine that any she-wolf so young and beautiful wouldn't be too thrilled about being sent away with a stranger who is not her mate."

I almost scoffed at the very thought.

"I have a duty to our pack," I repeated the line just as I rehearsed it. Logan ensured that he threatened me not to say anything mean to Alpha Lukas. Our reputation and pack's safety depended on my behaviour because my attitude and first impression could have him changing his mind and leaving to go back home.

I wasn't against the possibility, but I thought about the consequences I'd face should I have done something like that. I would be tortured even more by not only my brother but my uncle too.

"I am happy to hear you say that," he said with a short smile. It was only there for a second until it disappeared, and he looked away from me as if I was not even there. "Gentlemen? Shall we discuss business? I should leave soon."

"Of course," my uncle quickly agreed as he led Lukas up the stairs. My brother gave me a final warning look before disappearing up the stairs as well.

Sighing, I flung myself on the living room couch and closed my eyes as I thought about the hell I was now in. If only I hadn't sacrificed it all for my brother's love-or lack of, rather.

But now I knew better, and I knew that Logan would never love me like he did twenty years ago. I didn't think he was capable of loving anyone. The loss of our

parents changed him for the worse, and I had a feeling it all had to do with how they died, too. He saw it happen, and I'm pretty sure he didn't understand a single thing about it.

It ought to drive anyone crazy.

Soon, Toya joined me on the couch and watched a movie with me to 'help me get my mind off things'. But I could hear just enough what the men were discussing upstairs, and so it did me no justice. I also noticed that Toya would momentarily turn the volume up, and I knew she was trying to block out the sound of their conversation.

They were up there for thirty minutes. All I could think about was my life from here forward, my parents, my brother and the sad truth that I won't be able to tell Joshua goodbye. He was my only friend, and I left a letter with Toya to give to him, but it still hurt that I wouldn't be able to see him.

I have learned, however, to accept life as it is and try my best to adapt. This was just another huge step in doing so.

Soon, I could hear the thud of feet on the stairs as the men joined us again. There were huge smiles on my brother and uncle's faces, and Alpha Lukas seemed pleased. Secretly I hoped that the meeting would've gone badly and Lukas would change his mind. But

with the looks on everyone's faces, I knew all was falling into place for them.

I sighed as I rose to my feet as some pack members carried my bags out the door. I turned to Toya with teary eyes and pulled her in a hug. She remained my favourite person in this family, and I'd surely miss her.

"Remember what I said," she mumbled on my shoulder. "You are so much stronger than you think, my love. So, so much stronger."

"Thank you," I sniffled as I pulled away, and I felt strong, long arms being wrapped around my waist and pulling me away.

It didn't take long for me to realise that it was Lukas. But all I wanted to do was hold onto Toya and never let go. I didn't want to leave with this handsome stranger.

I didn't want to give up on my life.

Silent tears streamed down my cheeks as Lukas led me to the door. I passed my uncle on the way. He seemed a bit sad, but he composed himself as he nodded at me once.

Then, there was Logan. His face was stoic and void of all emotion. I could never understand my sibling love for someone who had shown me nothing but hate and misery all my life. But as I eyed him, I couldn't help but



think about that ten-year-old that once loved me. Did he die along with my parents? Was there not even a tiny bit of affection for the baby sister he once loved and the small fact that I was all he had left of them?

I knew he knew that there was a high chance I had nothing to do with their deaths, and I know there must've been a few times when he actually missed me and wished things were different. But perhaps his ego was too much in the way. He'd already convinced himself that he hated me, that switching up again would be far too confusing. Not for me or anyone else, but for him.

Without thinking about what I was doing, I pulled myself away from Lukas and threw myself at Logan, wrapping my arms around his shoulders.

I have never hugged him in my life, or maybe not when I could remember, and it felt strange. He didn't hug me back, of course, but what was more shocking was that he didn't push me away or bang my head against the door with a string of curse words. At first, his body was stiff, but then I felt him relax a bit.

He still didn't move his arms from his sides as I pulled away, and he didn't say a word to me as Lukas pulled on my hand again.

But the mere fact that he didn't push me away was enough to tell me that I didn't turn around for nothing.

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Somewhere deep inside, buried under all that layer of hate and hurt, my big brother was still in there. Who knows, maybe a few months or years apart was what he needed. And I could forgive him for all the hell he had caused me in my life. I already have.

All my unanswered questions were a mystery for life itself.

"Don't worry, I'll take care of you," Lukas said as we hit the cool, September air. I looked up to meet his soft grey eyes, and for the first time since I woke up, I didn't feel too scared again.

Of course, it only lasted for a second before I was freaking out again. But the truth was inevitable.

Here comes my new life and all the drama that awaits.