

# Fatal Temptation: Between Two Alphas

## novel Chapter 2

The moon rises full and bright, making it easy to see our many pack members lined up at the edge of the woods.

We each set aside our clothes, fold and place them atop shoes or tuck them into backpacks. All jewelry is removed, if anyone bothered to wear any.

I keep to the edge of the group. The new Luna makes it a point to eye me across the field. She'd given me an order. And with one imperial arch of her brow she dares me to disobey it.

"Tonight," she says, addressing the pack. "We mark the end of the old and start of the new."

And there, bathed in moonlight, she stands nude and proud. As comfortable in her skin as she is in her new role as Luna of my pack.

"Our union is blessed by the Goddess. For the glory of our pack and our community!"

My pack cheers.

Cameron looks on, smiling with pride.

"Mia Riorsen. Come forward."

I suck a breath as every wolf in my pack turns to stare at me. Being naked never bothered me before. We're wolves. We shift together; our animal sides don't care about propriety. But with every eye on me, I feel dissected. Lacking.

I'm too small. Too thick.

I've always been comfortable in my skin, but compared to Ashley, I am a troll beside a princess.

Was it any wonder Cam took one look at her and forgot all about me?

I reluctantly do as she commands, moving until I stand beside her. The assembled wolves stare at us, watching, comparing. They whisper and others laugh. Some packmates shake their heads in sympathy. Others point and snicker, their cruel smiles letting me know how glad they are to see that Cam is rid of me.

I'm not super popular, and there's been some petty jealousy from other she-wolves that crushed on Cameron over the years, but it's like a mirror is held up and I'm seeing clearly where I stand with my packmates for the first time.

"You were a good friend to my beloved," Ashley says loudly. "And I look forward to our friendship growing. Thank you for welcoming me."

She takes my hand.

Then she leads me into the woods and I have no choice but to follow.

In seconds she transforms and I shift too, following her over paths and game trails that I've been running since I was three.

She's fast. Her wolf lithe and lean. Silver from head to tail with lighter fur, almost white along her body. I don't hear my pack yet. I guess they're giving us time to make friends. My wolf snarls. She doesn't like the idea of this any more than me.

We run fast, her longer stride making me work harder to keep pace.

When we crest the rise at Turner's Peak, I'm a few seconds behind her. The minute I scale the top, she barrels into me.

Her teeth bite into my shoulder; if I hadn't pivoted, she would've caught my throat and killed me instantly.

We roll and fight, blood pooling and fur tearing. I grow weak from the wound near my neck. She didn't catch my jugular, but her teeth sank deep, and I'm bleeding freely.

The coppery scent of blood fills the air.

Cameron takes a menacing step forward.

“Cam, I-”

“Now Mia!” He projects his full alpha power into the command. I can’t disobey him. The threat is clear.

Leave or die.

The man I love would actually kill me.

I wait a beat, thinking maybe my dad or Jace or even Cam’s dad might intervene. They know me, they know I’d never do anything to hurt Cam or my family.

But no one moves.

Cam takes a menacing step toward me, and I run away.

Leaving behind everyone and everything. I have no clothes, no money, no ID. Nowhere to go and no idea how I will survive with no family and only a high school degree.

It would’ve been kinder to kill me.

*Fight. Live.* My wolf argues.

For what? I’m crying now, running and sobbing and bleeding.

*Fight. Live.* My wolf Nala demands before forcing us to shift.

*For our baby.*