Chapter 2 ROGUE ATTACK

ATHENA'S POV

The night grew colder as I left Nathan's house. The sky opened up and doused the earth with rain as if the heavens felt my misery and were crying with me. Icy drops assaulted my face, but my hot tears still burned my cheeks.

A few guards patrolled the area and, out of embarrassment, I stuck to the woods to stay out of sight as I made my way back home. I couldn't wait to get there to burn the stupid skimpy outfit my now ex-best friend gave me. I couldn't believe she'd stab me in the back like this — All while making me feel guilty for not sleeping with Nate, too. Then to turn around and do him behind my back? I felt sick.

Thunder sounded, rumbling loudly as the rain worsened. Flashes of lightning lit the path ahead, and the pack house came into view. But as soon as I saw it, an incredible uneasiness washed over me. I paused and hid behind a tree. Then I focused and saw my mother crouched in a defensive position. A burly man with a brown beard stood before her, and she gnashed and grunted, swiping her claws at him.

Her enhanced senses picked up my frail voice, and her head snapped toward the tree I was

"Mom," I whispered.

hiding behind. Without a word. I knew she wanted me to remain there. I scanned the area looking for my father until I found him being held by six muscular werewolves with black eyes.

"What is this, Cyrus?" my mother barked at the bearded man. "Let my husband go."

end," he stated coldly like he had not a care in the world. "Well, at least as Alpha Axel's luna. I'm giving you the chance to join me and become my luna. Once the new Alpha of the Moon Stone pack takes over, he won't need you. He's already mated." "New alpha?" my father asked, trying to shake off the rogues that held him down.

"This isn't personal, dollface. It's political, and I'm afraid your time as luna has come to an

"The ones who hired me to kill you. They're going to give me land and wealth and make me

an alpha of my own pack. They're giving me and my rogues status... all for killing you two." He chortled. My heart grew heavy. I couldn't believe someone would want to harm my parents.

"Who hired you?" my father asked.

"Like I'd tell you." He turned to my mother. "Join me, Christina. Your beauty has no limits,

and I've loved you for years now. Come and be my luna." He stretched his hand out toward my mom. My father growled, and the earth shook from its intensity.

"I'd rather die, you monster," my mother spat.

"I'll just take your daughter as a prize, then. I hear she's even more beautiful than you." He

licked his lips and my stomach heaved. My mother lunged at him, clawing him across the cheek. "You'll leave my daughter alone."

Cyrus let out a sinister shriek, backhanding my mother, sending her flying into the side of

her parked car. Seconds later, dozens of our werewolves showed up to fight the rogues. My

father must have mind-linked the warriors, telling them we were under attack. I clutched the tree trunk tighter, cursing myself, wishing I could shift too. I watched as my dad flung his captures off him with tremendous strength. With intense speed beyond my

ability to track, my father removed the heads of the men who held him a moment before. My parents looked majestic as they snapped and ripped into rogues, all while commanding

When Cyrus saw he was about to lose, he made a call. My father saw him backing away and grinned, making me feel like Dad had Cyrus right where he wanted him. "Leave while you still can, Cyrus," my father warned. "Otherwise, your head will roll next."

their wolves. They maintained amazing control of the situation.

Two figures in long coats with hoods covering their faces stepped out of the shadows, one holding a gun. My ears rang while he emptied bullets into my father's chest. I clasped my hands over my mouth to silence my screams as I watched in horror.

emptied his chamber into her. The other rogues quickly followed suit, breaking pack law and custom by pulling guns. They pointed them at our warriors, and I thought they'd shoot them all. But then one asked, "What about the daughter?"

My mother howled, but before she could lunge, the other cloaked figure revealed a gun. He

Some of my pack's strongest warriors fought but to no avail. Each ended up shot and killed.

"We'll find her. A little birdie told me she can't yet shift, so she's no threat," Cyrus answered.

Cyrus spared the omegas and others who surrendered rather than fighting back. The cloaked figures leaned down next to my parents and whispered something, then

they led them away, leaving my parents to die in the mud. I kept to the perimeter and used the parked cars to conceal myself while I made my way to my parents. They lay facing each other with their hands joined. The rain had stopped, and

disappeared back into the shadows. Cyrus and the others tormented my pack members as

"Mom, Dad," I sniffled, my voice cracking as I knelt next to them. "Athena," my mother gasped, blood running from her mouth. "Get out of here."

"No, Mom, I'm not leaving you. You'll heal, and we'll fight and win our pack back," I cried.

Then I saw the silver.

the moon shone high and bright.

The bullets were silver.

worse, make you his mate."

"No, please," I begged. "Please get up, Dad. You have to get up. You can't leave me." My world felt as though it was crashing down around me. My chest tightened so much, I could barely breathe.

authority he had left. "Please," my mother begged, struggling to sit up. "If Cyrus finds you, he'll kill you... or

"Mom..." I said with concern at the blood flowing from her wounds as she moved.

"You... have to go," my father said. "NOW!" he commanded, using the last bit of alpha

She waved me off, with her golden hair tangled and her pale skin becoming more ashen by the moment.

"And you can't trust anyone," my dad added with a grunt, as he struggled to sit up as well. "Not even members of our own pack."

done it with help from one of ours. Or maybe it was one of our own who had done it? Either way, who? My Mom sobbed as she brought her forehead against mine. "Stay strong, my girl, and remember, I love you."

For a split second, my face scrunched in confusion. But then I thought about it. Dad was

right. Someone betrayed my parents and orchestrated their executions, and it seemed they'd

"I love you both so much, too. You're the best parents in the world, and I can't picture life without either of you. I feel I'll die too if either of you leaves me."

After holding each other for a minute, my mother's grip loosened. She gasped against my ear as she took her last breath, then her body slumped. Dad tried to hold on for me but choked on his own blood as he fought to inhale. A moment later, his body went limp as well.

Mom cried even harder, and Dad growled and held us as tightly as he could.

Dad hugged us like he always did. "My beautiful girls. I love you two so much."

Grief-stricken, I sat trembling, still clinging to both of them. It felt like I was in a nightmare I couldn't escape.

But I had to escape, had to get out of there before Cyrus or the others found me. So I

I sprinted away. At first, I thought about running to Nate's house and telling him what

scurried back into the woods. Then I kicked off my pumps and let my toes dig in the mud as

happened. But my parents said I should trust no one. And besides, how could I trust Nate

after what he'd done with Lia? So I simply ran through the woods until my chest burned. I traveled for hours, stopping only to cry and catch my breath. Dawn approached as I came across a white-painted cottage with fire-red shutters. It sat in the middle of the forest, surrounded by a beautiful flower garden.

My chest tightened as I struggled to breathe. Thoughts of anger and revenge possessed my

mind, while my heart ached, knowing that I would never see my parents again. It didn't take

long for exhaustion, hunger, and dehydration to take over my body. I tried to make it to the cottage but my head was spinning and dark spots filled my blurry vision. Soon my feet gave way and I collapsed to the ground.