

# My Promised Rejection –

## Chapter 11 - 20

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[ 1,698 words ]

Olivia POV

My head hurts and I'm not sure why. My eyes feel heavy and, despite trying to force them open, I'm stuck in darkness. "My poor sweet girl. I know that you've been going through it the last few months, but you are so strong," a soft female voice says in the darkness. Great, I'm completely losing it. On top of everything else, I'm hearing voices. That's great. A soft giggle has me wanting to rage. "Do you think this is funny? It's not. I've lost everything, and now I'm losing my mind."

"You haven't lost everything, and you are definitely not losing your mind. In fact, you are about to gain the other half of your soul and if I say so myself, I'm pretty awesome," the voice says. Not only am I losing my mind, but my second personality is full of itself. "I'm not full of myself, I just know how special we are. I've waited a long time for us to be together. You are the other half of me. My best friend Oli," the voice says.

The sound of steady beeping interrupts the conversation that clearly shows that I need to get out of this place as soon as I wake up. All this talk about wolves and packs has my mind playing tricks on me. People do not become wolves. Werewolves aren't real no matter what I think I saw. "Oli, I really wish you would wake up. I know the doctor said you're fine, but I want to hear you say it" a familiar masculine voice says.

The beeping is getting louder and the scent of vanilla and citrus invades my nose. It smells like the creamsicles I ate as a kid. The beeping speeds up when the sound of another deep masculine voice speaks. "Are you sure that she is alright, Ace? Her eyes just started moving all over the place under her lids and her heartbeat sped up" the voice from earlier asks, that I now realize is Connor. I want to scream I'm fine, but I can't.

"I promise you Connor. Her vitals are all stable and after what you all told me has happened to her over the last month, I have no doubt her mind is doing this to protect her. When she is ready, she will wake up. I suggest that when she does wake up you give her time to adjust to learning she is a wolf. I can't imagine how freaked out she must be. I grew up knowing about wolves and seeing one shift the first time still freaked me out," the man says.

His deep voice and words seem to soothe something inside me. The beeping slows, and the scent wraps around me like a warm blanket. Just before I let myself fall back

into sleep, the feminine voice from earlier whispers "Mate." I'm not sure how much time passes when I feel soft fingertips rubbing the skin on my forearm. "I'm so sorry, Oli. I didn't mean to scare you. I thought seeing Maya would help you understand we weren't lying about being wolves. Please forgive me," Becca says.

I hate the regret and sadness I hear in Becca's voice. She is my person and I believe in my heart she wouldn't do anything to hurt me intentionally. Maybe she really believes she is a wolf. Xavier is like the cult leader, and he has brainwashed everyone to believe their wolves. The same giggle from earlier has me rolling my eyes even though I'm still surrounded by darkness. "This isn't a cult silly girl. It's a wolf pack" she says.

"That's why it was so important you came here Oli. We are going to shift very soon, We are very special," she says. "So you are telling me that I'm a werewolf, and you are my wolf." "You got it. My name is Danica and you are my human. We will be together for the rest of our lives. Now, it's time for you to wake up. Our brother is very worried about us," she says. "We don't have a brother anymore. Oh my God. I'm saying we like I believe what you're saying. Like I believe my own crazy thoughts."

You should believe me because it's the truth. I can't wait for us to shift, but you need to rest for that to happen. I know you're angry at Connor and our mom, but she starts to say, but I quickly block out her voice I'm not sure how I do it, but it's like I put the voice in a bubble.

I know she isn't gone, but she sounds far away. I can no longer hear each word, only a muffled sound. "My sweet Oli girl, I'm so sorry, my mother's words break through the darkness. I can feel her fingertips brushing against my forehead like she did so many times when I was a little girl.

Why did she do this to us? I am all alone. Despite my eyes being shut, I can feel the tears flowing down my cheeks. "Oli, can you hear me? Please don't cry. I never meant to hurt you or your dad. I loved your dad so much. I still do. I know you don't believe me, but knowing he's gone is hurting me too. I know you don't understand everything yet, but some day you'll have your own mate. You'll know you can't fight the love the bond creates no matter how hard you try," she says.

I want to scream and tell her to get out, but my mouth won't work. My eyes won't open. "You have to know that I would never choose to hurt you or your dad. I hope one day you'll forgive me. I love you so much, Oli," she says. I feel lips against my forehead before I hear the click of the door. I feel myself relax knowing she's gone. She's wrong. I would never do this to a man I love or my children.

I'm not sure how much time passes when a feeling of heat rushes through my body. My skin feels like it's on fire. God, what's happening to me? "Oli, I know you are still confused and upset, but you are going to need to trust me," the voice that called herself Danica says. "I need you to open your eyes, Oli. We have to get outside before we shift," she says. "Please make it stop," I plead as the heat morphs into pain.

“Wake up Oli” she growls. My eyes snap open, and I’m grateful to see the room is empty. I can’t deal with them on top of whatever the hell is happening. I throw the blankets off and attempt to stand. I fall to my knees fighting the scream that wants to escape my lips. I manage to get to my feet and stumble to the door. I make my way into the hallway just as the pain stops. “Keep going, Oli. It’s not over. We need to get outside,” Danica says again.

I move through the hall until I spot a sign above the door that says EXIT. Without a thought of alarms, I slam through the door. I head for the trees just as the crazy voice in my head tells me too. I don’t make it too far before I drop to the ground. The heat and pain are moving through my body again. “Don’t fight it, Oli. It will only make it worse,” she says. “Fight what? What the f\*\*k is happening to me?”

“Oli, we are going to shift, but if you try to fight against it the pain will only get worse,” she says. Despite every cell in my body wanting to stop what’s happening, I try to relax. It works until I hear the first crack that sounds like my bones are breaking. This time when the scream comes, I don’t stop it from spilling out of my lips. “Oli, where are you,” Rebecca calls out, but I couldn’t answer if I wanted to. Another crack this time in my leg and I scream again. “Oh Oli, why would you try to do this alone? I’m here with you. I promise you, no matter how much this hurts, you’ll be alright,” she says.

I try to focus on her voice as my bones continue to break. “It’s almost over Oli,” Danica says. This time instead of screaming, I whimper. Three more snaps and everything goes still. “You are so beautiful. I’ve never seen a wolf with such a beautiful silver coat” Becca says as she runs her hand down my side. What the hell, a wolf? “We shifted Oli. We are in my form now. We are one,” Danica says. “What do you mean? Why is Becca rubbing me like a dog?”

“We are not a dog. We are an amazing silver wolf,” Danica says with a growl. Alright, I’ve had it with whatever this is. I open my eyes, but everything looks strange. My vision is amazing. I can see farther than I’ve ever met Beccas and she smiles. “Even your eyes are beautiful. They look like emeralds When my body moves, I realize it’s not me controlling it. What the hell is happening: I ask again. I feel like \*.

Broken record.

I think should just show you Oli, since you are still struggling to believe what you are, Danica says Without warning, we are moving, but I feel like a passenger in my own body. Did my split personality take over and I’m stock like she was. Danica giggles and I roll my eyes. “I’m glad you find me ending up in the loony bin funny She comes to an abrupt stop and I realize we are standing on the bank of a lake.

The sound of footfall behind me has us turning in time to see the wolf that Becca called Maya coming up behind us. We turn back to the lake and step closer. When I look down, I feel like I can’t breathe. A huge wolf with emerald green eyes and fur that looks like silver silk is staring back at me. How can this be? I’m a wolf.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

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[ 1,690 words ]

Olivia POV

I know you're freaking out, Oli, but this is who you have always been. Your mother is wolf, Danica says. "How is this possible?" "I'm not sure how your mother ended up with your father, but I do know he was human," she says. "So why am I not just a human?" "Wolf genes are stronger than humans. We are a perfect blend of woman and beast," she says. "How am I just supposed to accept that everything I knew about my life was a lie?"

"My parents' love was a lie. My perfect family was a lie. My very existence was a lie." "Oli, I know you're angry but nothing was a lie. Your parents loved each other. You heard what your mother said when we were unconscious" she says. "Bullsh\*t. You don't just decide one day that you are in love with a perfect stranger and leave the man you have been with for more than two decades. That makes the love you supposedly shared a lie."

"I know you think that, but some day soon you are going to feel that pull to our mate and when you do, it won't matter what the situation is, you'll want him. He will complete everything for you," she says. "Never, I will never do to another person what my mother did. I don't care what anyone says, I won't." "Oli, the goddess, picks our mates. The bond isn't something we can fight. Very few people have the strength to reject their mate," she says before she goes quiet.

"So it can be done. My mother could have rejected Xavier and stayed with my father." "It's not that simple, Oli. You will understand when you feel the pull toward the man that was made for us," she says. "If he was made for us, then he wouldn't have chosen someone else. If he did then he isn't ours. I can promise you one thing that, no matter how strong my feelings are, I will reject our mate before I do what my mother did."

Danica whimpers and sadness flows through me. The feeling of someone rubbing our side startles me. "Are you ready to shift back, Oli," Becca asks. "Danica, can we shift back now?" "Of course, Oli. We will talk more later. I am always with you whenever you want to talk," she says. "I'm glad, even though I feel crazy right now, to have you, Danica. You and Becca are the only ones I can trust." "Me too, Oli. Now picture yourself in your human form. Picture your hair, eyes, and nose. Picture your arms, legs, and wiggly toes," she says with a chuckle.

I do as she says, and I'm grateful when the pain of shifting back is nowhere the same as when we shifted into Danica's form. "It will be less painful every time, Oli" Danica says. I look down and realize I'm standing in the open completely naked. I try to cover myself why Becca laughs. She tosses me a t-shirt and a pair of basketball shorts that look two sizes too big. I guess it's better than the alternative. I quickly dress. We start making our way back toward the mansion even though I wish I could be anywhere but here.

"Your brother is panicked. He went to the hospital and freaked out that you weren't there and that Ace has no idea where you've gone" she says. "How do you know?" "He just linked me. I told him you're safe but I didn't tell him you shifted," she says. "What do you mean he linked you?" "When we mark and mate with our mates, we are able to connect with each other. I can hear his voice in my head, and he can hear mine in his," she says.

"You know what, I can't take any more information tonight. My head feels like it's about to explode. I just want to go to my room. Take a hot bath and pretend I'm a normal girl for a little while longer." "You are still a normal girl, Oli. You are the same girl you've always been," she says. Before I can argue about how wrong she truly is, the door to the mansion opens and my mother steps out, followed by Xavier.

What do you think you are doing leaving the hospital before the doctor says it's alright? Ace said you left without a word to anyone. Do you know how worried we have all been," she says. "I'm not a child Evelyn. I feel fine. Besides, my wolf told me to leave the hospital, so I would say wolf trumps doctor." She looks between me and Bécca. "Olivia, we really need to talk to you about what happens when your wolf starts to talk to you" she says. "It's a little late for that. I've already shifted and, honestly, I don't want to talk to you right now. Hell if I haven't said it enough, I never want to talk to you. I'm exhausted, and I'm going to bed."

"You shifted alone" she says, tears welling in her eyes. I move to step around her and Xavier steps in front of me. "Olivia, I will expect you in my office at nine tomorrow to discuss how we move forward now that you have your wolf. You will be made part of the pack" he starts to say, but I cut him off. "No, I will not be staying here. I have five months and then I'm leaving. Nothing has changed just because I have a wolf."

I push the door open and make my way toward the stairs. I take them two at a time until I reach my room. Once I'm inside, I lock the door and head into my bathroom. I look at myself in the mirror. My hair is a mess and sweat covers my skin. My head feels like it's going to explode. How can all of this be real? For the last seventeen years, I thought I was human. How am I supposed to just accept that everything I've ever known was a lie?

Two Days Later

I feel numb standing here as person after person offers me their sympathy. Sympathy I don't want. What I want is my dad back. I wanted to be a b\*\*ch and tell Connor he could

sit with Evelyn in the back of the room, but if I'm honest, I need him and Rebecca to get through this. Becca threads her arm through mine when there seems to be a break in the people paying their respects. "Do you want to take a break? We can step outside and get some air" she asks.

I nod grateful for her support. "Connor, we are going to get some fresh air. We will be back in a few minutes," she says and leads me toward the back of the room. When we near the door, my eyes meet Evelyn's. It takes all my control not to scream at her that she doesn't get to cry as I watch tears roll down her cheeks. She is the reason he's dead. Xavier sits stoically by her, side and if it wouldn't take the attention off the reason we are all here, I would tell him to get the f\*\*k out.

"They aren't important right now, Oli. Let's just go outside," Becca says. As soon as we step out the door, every emotion I've been trying to keep in check washes over me. I'm grateful when Becca leads me toward the side of the building as the first sob leaves my lips. She pulls me into her arms and I cry for all I've lost. For everything that feels out of control, I let the tears fall. "Oli, I know how hard it is to lose a parent, but I promise you that he will be watching over you just like my parents watch over me," Becca says.

"It's alright to be sad, but you have to find a reason to be happy because that is what your dad would want. He would want you to go to school, to fall in love, and to live the life that you were always meant to have. I know you say that you wish you were just the normal girl you thought you were, but you were never normal Oli. You were always special, and your dad knew that. He knew that you were a wolf, and he loved you more than anything in his world," Becca says.

I absorb Becca's words. She is right. Even though she never met my father, everything she just said is absolutely true. I close my eyes tight and make a silent vow to live the life my father wanted me to have. I give her one last squeeze before I release her. I take her hands in mine. "Thank you, Becca. Thank you for being there for me when I've felt like everything in my life is going to sh\*t. My dad would have really loved you for Connor and for me. It's her turn for tears to fall, I give her one last hug before we decide to head back inside.

When we step around the building, I stop in my tracks when I see Evelyn and Xavier standing in front of the entrance. I decide I'm just going to walk around them. This is not the place to make a scene. "Oli, are you alright, Evelyn asks after she lightly grips my arm when I try to pass her. I shake her hand off my arm. "My father is dead. So no, Evelyn, I'm not alright. Please feel free to leave. I don't want either of you here."

I turn walking through the door without giving either of them a chance to speak. I refuse to let them make today about them. They shouldn't even be here. I make my way back toward my seat. Connor's eyes are full of concern as he follows me until I take my seat. Becca comes to sit next to me again. I'm grateful that the seats that Evelyn and Xavier occupied stay empty.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[ 1,941 words ]

Olivia POV

I make my way down to the large kitchen that I now know serves the meals for the entire pack. I had so many questions for Becca when I finally accepted that I'm a wolf. I figured if I had to stay here five more months I would spend as much time with Becca as I could. The minute I turn eighteen, I intend to move back to my father's house and start my online classes.

I've never been so grateful for being a nerd in school. I completed all the necessary classes to graduate early. I have no intention of attending graduation since my father won't be there to see me walk across the stage. Becca was upset when I told her, but she understood. I'm not sure if she has told Connor, but he doesn't get a vote in this.

I step into the kitchen and smile when I see the left-over food from this morning, including a huge selection of muffins and Danish. I grab a plate, taking a muffin, a Danish, and a handful of bacon. Since my first shift, I've noticed my appetite is crazy. Becca assures me that it's normal. "Wolves eat a lot, which comes in handy since I love junk food," she said. I take my plate intending to eat outside. I refuse to go to the dining room since I'm still avoiding talking to Evelyn and Xavier.

As soon as I step outside, the sound of raised voices gets my attention. I try to ignore the group of girls that seem to be arguing, but a loud b\*\*ch with blonde hair has my feet stopping in my tracks. "Do you really think he'll choose a loser like you? You are a pathetic omega. You aren't worthy of Kevin. Even if, by some miracle, the goddess made you mates, he'd reject you. You are useless and pathetic," the mean girl says.

I look up at the sky debating whether, to get involved, but I already know there is no way I can walk away while another girl who looks very much alone is berated by Regina George and her gaggle of mean girls over there. I set my plate on a nearby picnic table and make my way over to the group. "Why are you being so mean, Collette? I've never done anything to you. Kevin and I are friends," the girl says, tears streaming down her cheeks.

"I want to make sure you know that Kevin is off limits. He is mine. He is to be the next Beta and he needs a strong mate. My father is a warrior while your father is a gardner. You are pathetic and could never be Beta Female. Stay away from him, or I'll make your life even more of a hell than it already is," she says. "Boy, you must be really worried that this Kevin is going to be her mate."

All heads whip towards me. "Who the f\*\*k are you and why are you getting involved in my business," the b\*\*ch asks. "Me, I'm Olivia and you made it my business by acting like a raging b\*\*ch in front of everyone with your cronies." "Do you know who I am" she asks. I roll my eyes and take a step towards her. "I'd say your name is Regina George, but I have a feeling that your mother didn't know you would become such a nasty b\*\*ch, so no I don't."

Her eyes turn black, and she takes a step toward me. Before I know what's happening, she is on her a\*\* in front of me with Becca standing over her. "You wouldn't be f\*\*king with my new sister, would you Collette," she asks. The girl keeps her head down. "I didn't know who she was, Rebecca. She called me a b\*\*ch. I was just defending myself," Collette says.

"You are a b\*\*ch Collette. Now, what I want to know is how Oli figured that out so quickly" Becca says. "She was saying mean shat to that girl with the tears on her cheeks, I say pointing toward the girl. Rein, what was she saying. Becca aska, Ram ataye quiet, and I realize she is afraid of what happens next if she tella, I reiterate word for word what I heard Collette say. Becca growls as she reaches down and pulls Collette up by the collar of her shirt.

I wonder what Kevin would say if he knew how you were treating the girl he is in love with," Becca says. "Bullsh\*t, she is an omega," Collette yells. The sound of the door opening has us all turning toward the sound, A handsome guy with a good build steps outside, I turn just in time to see the blood drain from b\*\*ch girl's face. I know Immediately this is Kevin. I turn back in time to watch his eyes find Rain among the girls.

Anger flashes in his eyes as he makes his way toward her. "Why don't we ask Kevin if he thinks that Rain is worthy of being his mate?" "Who the f\*\*k said she isn't worthy," he growls. "That would be queen b\*\*ch over here. She was pretty ruthless actually in telling her to stay away from you." He offers me a smile. "You must be Oli. Connor told me you were a bad\*\*. Now I can see why. Thank you for defending Rain," he says before he turns toward Collette.

Becca releases her as Kevin steps closer. "Let me make this perfectly clear to you, Collette. I don't want you. I have never wanted you. I may not be able to say it until her birthday, but that beautiful woman standing over there is the only woman I want. You would do well to remember what happens when you disrespect a member of this pack that outranks you," he says.

"That must suck to hear after you were just out here talking sh\*t. Sucks to suck, doesn't it, Collette." No

sooner do the words leave my mouth does she lunge at me. Without a second thought, I land a solid punch to her jaw. I'm shocked when she flies back onto her a\*\*. A loud growl startles me.

A man I've never seen before stalks towards me. "How dare you hit my daughter," he says, his eyes almost

black. "Bart, I suggest you back up unless you want me to put you on your a\*\*" Kevin says. "Why are you defending this girl? She isn't even part of the pack. I want her punished for hitting my daughter," the man says, glaring at me.

"Your daughter is the one that is going to be punished for bullying other pack members. Not only did she bully a pack member, but she attacked a guest of the Alpha. Now what do you think the alpha is going to do when he finds out about your daughter's transgressions," Kevin says.

I watch the man swallow as his eyes turn back to their sh\*t brown color. This time when he looks at me, there is fear in his eyes. "Collette, get over here and apologize to the Alpha's guest, now." "Daddy, she hit me.

Besides, it's not like I was bullying an important member of the pack. Rain is just an omega. Even you think -they are useless," she whines. Kevin growls, stepping into the man's space.

"Maybe it's you the Alpha needs to teach a lesson about respect, Bart, since your daughter has clearly learned her hateful behavior from you," Kevin says. All the color drains from Bart's face, and I hold back the urge to laugh. Before Bart can say another word, Xavier's voice breaks the silence. "What is going on here?"

"Alpha, that girl hit me," Collette whines.

Xavier looks at me, his expression/unreadable. Evelyn is standing next to him. "Based on the fact that my son's future Beta looks like he is ready to lose his sh\*t on your father, I'm going to guess there is more to the story. I want you all in my office now," he says before he turns to leave with Evelyn. "You heard the Alpha, move," Kevin says to Bart and Collette.

Becca leads me over to Rain. "Rain, this is Oli. She is my sister-in-law. Oli, this is Rain," Becca says. "It's so nice to meet you, Uli. Thank you for helping me. I hope you don't get into a lot of trouble for doing it," she says, her voice laced with worry. I reach out taking her hand "Hey, don't worry about that. I can't stand girls ke Collette. She had no right to say those things to you. Besides, It looks like you're the one Kevin Becca outs me off and I wonder why.

We make our way to Xavier's office. As soon as we step inside, Collette is crying about how I hit her. As soon as she is finished, Xavier turns to me. Evelyn is seated beside him and her eyes are focused solely on me "Now do you want to tell me your side of what happened that led you to assault a pack member?" I grip my fists at my side. "Alpha" Becca says, but he cuts her off. "Olivia needs to speak for her own actions Rebecca" he says.

I take a deep breath trying to get control of the anger bubbling inside of me. “Why should I bother explaining when you clearly believe your pack member?” “Alpha, it wasn’t Olivia’s fault,” Kevin says. Xavier growls and Kevin bears his neck in submission. Another new thing Becca taught me about wolves and respect. “I asked Olivia. If she doesn’t want to tell me her side of things, then I will have no choice but to accept Collette’s side of things as truth. Now I’ll ask you again, Olivia, why did you assault a member of my pack,” he asks.

I stare at him, refusing to give him the satisfaction of pleading my case. After a long pause, he looks back at Collette. “I apologize Bart and Collette, on behalf of my daughter,” he says. “I am not your daughter. I am nothing to you. In fact, I’m not waiting the five months. I’m leaving this f\*\*king prison today,” I scream before

I rush out of the office. The growls and sound of things breaking doesn’t make me miss a step.

Once I reach the room I’ve been sleeping in, I slam the door, locking it behind me. I start to throw all of my stuff into the two duffle bags I have. I only need my pictures and some clothes. They can burn the rest of my things for all I care. Banging on the door makes me jump, but I make no move to open it. “Oli, please honey, open the door. We need to talk,” Evelyn says through the door. I’m done talking to any of them. I make my way over to the window.

“Are you sure about this, Oli? Maybe we should talk to your mom,” Danica says. “I really need you to be on my side right now, Danica. I can’t stay here a minute longer.” “I’m always on your side, Oli. If this is what you need to do, I’m behind you every step of the way” she says. I smile as I unlock the window.

Without a thought, I get out onto the small piece of roof under the window and strip off my clothes. I’m grateful the yard below seems to be empty. I toss my bags first and then shift. “Oli please,” is the last thing I hear as Danica takes over. Thank God I have the key to the house dad left me because I’m never coming back to this place again.

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[ 1,595 words ]

Connor POV

As soon as I enter the pack house from patrolling, I know something is wrong. I make my way to Xavier’s office to find out exactly what’s going on. My mother’s sobs are the first thing I hear as I push open the already cracked door. “How could you, Xavier? You

know damn well that girl was in the wrong, but instead of showing Oli your support you made her feel like an outsider. You hurt my daughter again,” my mother says.

Xavier reaches for her, but she steps back from him and hurt flashes in his eyes. “What the hell happened?” Xavier looks at me and I can see the regret in his eyes. “Connor, Oli is gone. There was an incident with Collette, Bart’s daughter. Oli hit her and instead of Xavier defending her, he apologized to Collette and Bart,” my mother says.

Anger bubbles up inside me. “What the hell were you thinking? Oli wouldn’t have hit the girl if she didn’t deserve it.” “I know that. I just wanted her to tell me what happened. To trust me to do right by her. I know you and your sister are not my pups by blood, Connor, but you are my pups in here,” he says, pointing to his chest.

“I know Oli hates me and I understand why. I hate myself too right now. If I didn’t come along you would all be happy and Charles would be alive,” he says. He looks back at my mother, who has tears streaming down her cheeks. “I’m so sorry, Evie. I just wanted her to tell me what happened, so I could put that little snotty b\*\*ch in her place. So I could show Oli that I believed her, not a she-wolf who thinks she is better than everyone else,” he says.

I can’t bring myself to offer him comfort despite believing he didn’t mean to hurt Oli. She seems to be getting hurt at every turn. I’m failing her as her big brother. I hate myself for my part in her pain. I turn to leave, needing to find Oli. I step toward the door without sparing Xavier and my mother another look. “Connor,” my mother saying my name, has me stopping my steps. “Connor, please bring her back,” she says.

“No, I won’t. I won’t continue to hurt her for you or anyone else. She doesn’t want to be here. She doesn’t want to be around us. I’m going to make sure she is alright, but I won’t force her to come back to this place, which is nothing but pain for her. She has shifted to her wolf for the first time, so there is no reason to force her to stay here,” I say keeping my eyes focused on the hallway.

“She needs to be with wolves, Connor,” Xavier says. “No, she needs to be happy, Xavier. She isn’t happy here.

In fact, she hates it here. She hates all of us. No words are going to change that. We all made our choices and I refuse to disrespect my sister any further by taking away hers.” I step into the hallway and Becca has a huge smile on her face.

She moves forward, wrapping her arms around me. “Let’s go check on Oli,” she says. “Do you know where she went?” “There is only one place she would go, Connor. The last place she was truly happy” she says. I take her hand leading her out to my car. We pull up to the gate and I expect the guard to stop us, but instead the gate opens wide. I assume Xavier gave permission for us to leave, otherwise we would have been stopped.

It doesn't take long for us to pull up to the house where I grew up. A home that was full of love and laughter.

A dull ache in my chest forms when I think about the man that won't be there when I open the door. "Are you alright, Connor? I can feel your sadness through our bond," Becca says. I take her hand and bring it to my lips.

"I don't know. The guilt is too much sometimes. It's hard to believe he's gone. Not only is my father gone, but my sister hates me."

"Your father loved you, Connor. He wanted you to be happy. He wouldn't want you to feel all this guilt. You aren't responsible for his death, Connor. As for Oli, she doesn't hate you. She is in pain. She feels lost and she is angry. Your mother and Xavier didn't handle things well. She should have been told what she was a long time ago. They shouldn't have ripped her away from the only parent she felt she could trust," Becca says.

I take her face in my hands and pull her lips to mine. Goddess, I love this woman. When we break apart, I rest my forehead against hers. "I thank the goddess every day for making you mine." She presses a kiss on my lips "I love you, Connor. You're stuck with me," she says. A knock on the window startles both of us. I turn my head and come face to face with my very pissed sister. "Leave" she says before I even open the window.

"Olivia, we just came to check on you," I say as I step out of the car. "I don't need you to check on me. I told you before I don't have a mother or brother anymore. Go back to your wolf pack and forget I exist," Oli says. "Oli, I know your upset about what happened with Xavier, but Connor doesn't deserve your anger right now," Becca says. Oli whirls on her. "Really Becca then who does? Who should I be angry at," she practically yells.

"Olivia, can we just go inside and talk? When were done, Becca and I will leave. We didn't come here to upset you." "I figured you came here because your new daddy and Evelyn sent you to drag me back to my gilded cage," she says. "Olivia, I love you. No amount of b\*\*chiness is going to change that. I didn't come here to drag you back. I just want to make sure you are alright, and before you tell me you don't want me to, I don't care."

"Now, let's go inside." I can see she still wants to argue, but I'm grateful when she turns walking toward the front door. When we get inside, I head into the living room and plop down on the couch. A couch I spent hours on playing video games as a kid. Becca sits next to me while Oli takes the comfy chair my father loved to sit in. "I'm not going back, so this Jedi mind trick you're trying to play isn't going to work," she says.

Goddess, she is such a nerd. "Tell me you're a nerd without telling me you're a nerd." She glares at me. "Olivia, I swear we are not here to drag you back. In fact, I told mom and Xavier I wouldn't take your choice away, since you've already shifted. I really am

sorry, Olivia. Sorry I wasn't a better brother. I know dad left you everything, but with you being seventeen, I'm not sure if you'll be able to access the funds."

"I know the house and car are paid for but I can give you money for everything else until you can access the money dad left." "I appreciate that, Connor, but I have my own savings. I've been saving everything I've made since I got my job two years ago," she says. "Well, if you need anything, I'll be here to help you. I hope some day you'll forgive me, Olivia. I love you." "Maybe some day I'll be able to get past what happened, but right now the pain of everything that happened is too fresh, Connor. I do love you, but I just need time," she says.

I feel the tears that stream down my cheeks and make no effort to stop them from falling. "Would it be alright if I came to visit you, Oli? I can't lose my best friend," Becca says. "I would like that, Becca. I think I'm going to start my online classes now so I'll be ahead by the time I start actual college. So you can stop by whenever you like," she says. I'm glad she will at least have Becca until she is ready to let me back into her life.

"Alright, we should get back to the pack. Olivia, I know this whole wolf thing is new to you, but at some point your wolf will need to run. If you decide you want to run, I can bring you to the pack. You won't have to talk to anyone. It will just give you and your wolf a chance to shift and run. My wolf, Cosmo, would love a chance to run with his sister, but there is no pressure." "I'll think about it," she says.

Becca takes my hand and leads me out of the house. I stand on the porch until I hear the lock engage. When we reach the car, I open Becca's door before I slide into the driver's seat. Once I'm inside, I lean my head back on the headrest. She'll come around Connor. I'm not sure if she'll ever have the relationship she did before with your mom, but I know in my heart she loves you. She wants to forgive you, Connor, Becca says. Goddess, I pray she's right.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[ 1,612 words ]

Olivia POV

Waking up in my own bed in my own room is surreal. I was so exhausted after Connor and Becca left last night, I took a quick shower and slid under the covers. I was out in seconds. Now I need to get myself around and head to the grocery store. After I have some breakfast, I plan to do some research on my computer for online classes. All these years, I believed I would follow in my father's footsteps in advertising, but after seeing him in the hospital, I really think I want to be a nurse.

Seeing my father in the hospital surrounded by people intent on saving him stirred something inside of me. I slide out of bed and grab a pair of ripped jeans and my favorite worn Star Wars t-shirt. I can't help but smile when I think about what my brother said last night about me being a nerd. For a moment it felt like nothing had happened between us. I miss spending time with Connor, but seeing him makes all the pain of losing my dad come to the surface.

I know it's not his fault, but I just need some time. Once I'm showered and dressed, I head downstairs. I grab the mail that the neighbor had been collecting and look through it. I've never been so grateful that my parents insisted I learn to balance a checkbook because, right now, it's going to come in handy. I go to the fridge and throw out the few items that were left. Grabbing my keys, I head for the door. Anger flashes in my belly when I throw open the door to find Evelyn and Xavier standing on the porch.

"Why are you here? I'm not going back. If you make me, I'll just keep running away" I say before they can even speak. "Olivia, we just want to talk," Evelyn says. "I was just on my way out. I don't have time to talk to either one of you." "Olivia, this is important," Xavier says. "Fine, we can talk on the porch. I don't want either of you in my home." Hurt flashes in Evelyn's eyes, but I can't bring myself to care. I take a seat on the glider chair while Xavier and Evelyn sit on the swing.

Everything in me wants to scream they have no right, but I temper down my anger. My mother and father used to sit on that swing at night after they thought we went to bed. They would talk about the smallest things but every time I heard them I knew I wanted the same thing one day. "Olivia, I'm sorry about yesterday. I wanted you to tell me what happened, so I could show you that I had your back. I knew exactly who was to blame, but I needed you to trust me enough to tell me your side," Xavier says.

"Why would you ever think that I would trust you? You destroyed my family. Besides, I don't need you to have my back. You are not my father, and you will never be." "Olivia, we have all made mistakes," Evelyn speaks as she takes Xavier's hand in hers. "No we haven't, Evelyn. My father and I made no mistakes. The selfish choices you made is what brought us here. Why can't you just leave me alone? Haven't I been hurt enough by your actions?"

"Oli, you are my daughter. No matter how angry you are at me, I love you. You're right that I made many mistakes, and I'm so sorry for the hurt I've caused you. For the hurt I caused Charles. I'm begging you, Oli, to forgive me. I know it will take time," she says. "No, I won't forgive you. I might forgive Connor because dad told him to go, but I'll never forgive you. You made your choices, and now I'm making mine. If this is why you came then I think it's time you leave."

She sobs and Xavier pulls her into his arms. "Olivia, your mother loves you. I know you're angry, and you have every right to be, but hurting her is not going to bring Charles back," Xavier says. "You don't get to say my dad's name. You are the reason that all of this happened. Now I want you both to leave and never come back."

"We can't do that Oli," Evelyn says. "My hame la Olivia, You should know you named me. You've lost the right to call me Olivia, wolves have all kinds of rules. One of them is that if you aren't part of a pack you are considered a rogue and fair game to other wolves" Xavier says. "I'm not going back to the pack." "We won't force you, Olivia, to live there, but we need you to join the pack, so your scent will show you are protected. If you do this you'll only have to return for mandatory meetings or if you need to let your wolf run," Evelyn says.

"So are you saying there are other wolves here that aren't part of the pack?" "Yes, Olivia. Many wolves don't want to have to answer to an Alpha, so they become rogues. You aren't safe without the pack scent. Your mother and I know there is nothing we can say that will get you to agree to come back with us willingly, but for your safety if you don't agree, you will leave me no choice," he says. "Are you threatening me, Xavier?" "You may not care for me, Olivia, but despite what you think, I care about you. Your safety is mine and your mother's priority, so you can take my words anyway you like," he says. "Xavier," Evelyn says. "So if I do this, joining the pack thing you leave me alone." "Unless there is a threat and all pack members are called back, then yes, we will leave you to live in peace. I do hope in time you will change your mind about forgiveness,"

Evelyn says.

"Fine, I'll join the pack, but that's it." Danica whimpers and I hate the sadness she feels. "Connor mentioned me being able to come to the pack to let Danica run. If I do that, will you try to talk to me?" "No, as much as it breaks my heart, we will honor your wishes, Olivia" Evelyn says. "Alright, when will we do whatever it is to make me part of the pack." "We will have the ceremony in two days. Until then, I will have Kevin following you everywhere," Xavier says.

"That isn't necessary, and you never said anything about a ceremony." "Whether you want to be or not, you are part of the Alpha family Olivia. It requires that we have a ceremony to welcome you to the pack. As far as you having a guard, it is necessary unless you want to return to the pack until your ceremony," Xavier says. Anger pulses through me but I push it back. I just have to get through this stupid ceremony, and then I can get on with my life.

"Fine, Kevin can follow me around. Now can you both leave? I need to get groceries." Xavier stands and offers Evelyn his hand. I can tell she wants to say more to me, but I'm grateful when she stands and they leave. I hadn't noticed the car behind theirs until now. A smiling Kevin is leaning against the compact blue car. I wait till Xavier and Evelyn pull away to make my way down the porch and over to Kevin. "This isn't necessary, you know." Before he can answer, the passenger door opens and a smiling Rain steps out.

She moves around Kevin and, as soon as she reaches me, she pulls me in for a hug. "Oli, I'm so glad to see you again. Becca wanted to come too, but she promised to go

for a run with Connor. She said she was going to talk to you about having a girl's night one day this week," Rain says. I hold back the smile when I see disappointment flash in Kevin's eyes. He is for sure her mate. I wonder why he hasn't told her yet.

"Are you ladies ready to go shopping," Kevin asks, breaking me out of my thoughts. "Yes, but I still want it noted that I think this is unnecessary." "Noted, now get your butt in the car Oli," he says. As much as I hate the idea of having a babysitter, I don't mind spending time with Rain and Kevin. It doesn't take long for us to reach the closest supermarket. It's strange to be here after all I've learned the last few weeks. To know how different I am than everyone I've ever known.

Rain loops her arm through mine while Kevin follows behind us. As soon as we step into the supermarket, my senses are overloaded with all the different smells. I fight the urge to gag and Kevin chuckles from behind me I turn and glare at him "You'll get used to the enhanced sense of smell. Let's get what you need and get you home, he says. Twenty minutes later I have the basics, and I'm thrilled to be stepping out into the fresh

We make our way over to the car when I hear a low growl nearby. Kevin turns immediately as a man steps out of some trees not too far from the parking lot. "Rogue," Kevin growls while he ushers both Rain and me into the car. My heart feels like it's going to beat out of my chest. My life is never going to be normal again.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[ 1,879 words ]

Two Days Later

Olivia POV

As I approach the gate, the urge to turn my car around is overwhelming. The thought of stepping foot back in this place makes me want to run. Before I can change my mind, a man steps around the gate and approaches my car. I open my window and his low growl startles me. "What is your business here, rogue?" "Well, aren't you just a ray of sunshine? I'm here to join the pack." Fear flashes in his eyes. "Olivia," he says.

"That's me. Can you open the gate, so I can get this over with, please." "I'm so sorry" he starts to say, but I quickly cut him off. "Just forget about it and open the gate." "Of course," he says, rushing away from my car.

Once I'm parked, I make my way toward the pack house. I smile when I see Becca standing on the steps waiting for me.

She squeals as she rushes toward me. As soon as she reaches me, she pulls me in for a bone-crushing hug. ‘Becca, you act like we haven’t seen each other in years.’ “It feels like it. I’m used to seeing you every day. I’ve missed you,” she says. “I’ve missed you too. Now tell me about this ceremony.”

“It will be in the training field and most of the pack will attend. Xavier, Evelyn, Connor, and I will be on stage with you. Xavier will speak first about welcoming you into the pack, then he will call you to stand in front of him. He’ll cut his hand, letting some blood drip into the pack chalice. Then he’ll cut your hand. Once the bloods mixed, he’ll hand you the chalice. One little sip, and you are part of the pack,” she says.

“What the hell? You expect me to drink blood. There is no way I’m doing that.” “It’s the only way to become a member if you aren’t born in the pack,” she says. “You’re telling me Connor had to drink Xavier’s blood.” “Yes, he did. He is also going to take over for Xavier someday. He will become the Alpha of the pack and I will be his Luna. I’m hoping when that happens you’ll come back to live here with us,” she says.

I hate the hope I see in her eyes, but that won’t ever happen. “Let’s not talk about that right now, Becca. I need to get through this bullsh\*t tonight. Then I can start my college courses. I’ve decided I’m going to become a nurse.” She squeals pulling into her arms again. “That’s amazing. When you’re done with schooling, you can work in the pack hospital,” she says. “Becca, I’m not sure if I’ll ever be willing to move back to this place.”

“Well, I’m not giving up the dream. Besides, you never know, maybe you’ll feel differently once you find your mate,” she says. My mind flashes back to the day in the hospital when I smelled creamsicles and Danical whispered mate. Before I can ask her, Xavier’s voice brings me out of my thoughts. “I’m glad to see you came, Olivia,” he says. “I didn’t have much choice if I didn’t want to be a prisoner here again, did I?”

“You look beautiful, Olivia” Evelyn says as she links her arm with his. I’m wearing a blue sundress and I have my hair in a French braid. I nod just as Connor steps out of the pack house. He smiles when he sees me. “Are you ready to do this, Olivia,” he asks as he approaches me. “As ready as I’ll ever be.” Becca links her arm with mine, and we make our way down a path through a large group of trees.

I’m shocked when we breach the tree line to see a huge clearing that is full of people. There is a small stage that everyone is facing. Becca continues to lead me through the crowd that parts as we approach. Right before we reach the stage, the scent from the hospital is so strong it overwhelms me. My steps falter and Becca looks at me with concern. “Are you alright,” she asks. “I’m fine.” “Mate,” Danica whispers, and I swear my heart feels like it’s going to beat out of my chest.

There to be a way thing happening, declare in the trek of more, Becca leads me up on the stage, long out at the proud and ever gearing, ten the man, the scant tongues to Water to this joining ceremony, Xavier’s booming voice pulls my attention from the

crowd. We are here today to welcome my stepdaughter, Olivia Crocker to the pack 3 force myself to not react to being called his anything

Olivia, please join me in the center of the stage he says I quickly more, wanting to get this over so I can figure out exactly who that scent is coming from. Danica is pacing in my mind and honestly it's giving me a headache. "Olivia Crocker, today you become part of a pack. A family of wolves that protect each other, he says Evelyn hands him a dagger that looks like it's worth a fortune. It's gold and covered in jewels.

I watch as he drags the blade across his palm. Blood trickles down his hand into a chalice that looks exactly like the dagger. What shocks me more is that the cut heals within seconds. "Olivia, please give me your hand," he says. I hesitate for only a second before I place my hand in his. He runs the blade down my hand and I wince. The blood runs into the chalice that my mother holds in place. My hand heals just as quickly. Holy sh\*t that's new.

"That's part of being a wolf," Danica says, and I fight the smile that wants to spread across my face. "Olivia, do you vow to put the needs of the pack before your own?" I'm not sure what the hell that means, but I answer how I think they expect. "I do." "Please drink from the chalice which will be the final step to ensure your link with the pack," he says. I look down at the blood thinking about how f\*\*ked up my life has become. I am a werewolf and I'm drinking blood.

It sounds like a horror film gone wrong. I force myself to bring the chalice to my lips and take a small sip. Despite how disgusting the thought of it being blood is, it doesn't taste awful. The minute I hand the cup back to Evelyn, my head starts to spin. "It's alright Olivia, just breathe," Xavier says, but it sounds different. His lips never move, and I swear his voice is in my head. "My voice is in your head. As Alpha, I can speak to any pack member through a mind link," he says.

Anger rises in my body. "I don't want you in my head." "It's alright, Olivia. You can put a block up that I'll only be able to break if it's a pack emergency. Just think about putting a wall between us," he says. "Gladly," I say. I close my eyes and focus on the wall. Suddenly, the feeling of his presence is gone. I open my eyes, and he is smiling at me. I don't return it as I once again face the crowd.

This time, when I look into the crowd, my eyes immediately meet a set of ocean blue ones that have my knees ready to b\*\*ckle. "Is that him, Danica?" "It is. He is our mate. Goddess, he's gorgeous. I can't wait to mark him," she says. "Slow down, for goodness sake. We don't even know him yet." "We don't need to. The goddess chose him for us," she says. I'm just about to tell her to get herself under control when a beautiful woman with long flowing red hair and a pup on her hip takes the seat next to him.

He immediately takes the pup from her and leans over, pressing his lips to hers. Danica growls before letting out a whimper that breaks my heart. I've never met this man but I feel betrayed. How can I feel betrayed when he doesn't even know I who I am? "He is

meant to be ours,” Danica says. “Oli, are you alright? The ceremony is over. We can get off the stage now, Becca says. I turn to her and simply nod. We make our way through the sea of people slowly as they each want to welcome me. I feel like I can’t breathe when the red head and my mate approach me. The little girl in his arms is a carbon copy of the woman standing next to him. “Candace, I didn’t expect to see you here tonight,” Becca says.

Something in her voice makes unease roll through me. “Well, I missed Ace and our daughter. Besides, Collette told me all about our new pack member, so I decided I should meet her,” she says.

Why do I get the sinking feeling that Becca doesn’t like this girl? “Ace, I know you have sort of met Olivia, but she wasn’t really awake, Olivia, this is Ace Morris, the pack doctor,” Becca says. Ace reaches for my hand, but Candace quickly pushes it out of the way, taking my hand with hers. “I’m Candace Morris, Ace’s wife,” she says. “Want mate,” Danica chants as I try to focus on the situation. “It’s very nice to meet you both. What is this beautiful little girl’s name?” “Our pup,” Danica says. “Her name is Della,” Ace says.

“It’s very nice to meet you, Della” I say reaching out my hand to take hers, but Candace steps in the way. “She doesn’t really like strangers” she says. “Candace,” Ace says her name like a warning. He steps around her, moving close enough that his scent is making it hard for me not to reach out and touch him. “Hello sweetheart,” I say, and Della reaches out to me. “May I,” I ask Ace and he nods.

He hands her to me. Our hands brushing against each other has the tingles taking me off guard. I quickly pull her into my arms. She lays her head against my chest and I can’t help but smile. “She is precious.” “You look good holding her,” Becca says. A low growl has me looking at Candace. “Chill Candace, I just meant with a pup, not your pup. Although, it’s not like you’ve marked Ace,” Becca says. “I don’t think that’s any of your business, Becca. Just because you’re going to become Luna doesn’t give you the right to speak about my relationship with Ace,” she says.

This time it’s me that growls, holding tightly to the little girl in my arms. “Enough Candace. Becca, I appreciate you worrying about me, but you don’t need to. Candace is right. What happens between us is just that, between us,” he says. “I’m sorry, Ace,” she says. “It’s alright Becca.” He reaches out and I hand him Della. “It was very nice to see you again, Olivia. I’m glad I got the chance to meet you while you were awake this time. Let’s go home, Candace,” he says. My chest aches as I watch the man that is my mate walk away with his wife.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[ 1,631 words ]

Olivia POV

“Are you alright, Becca asks me as everyone around us starts to head back toward the pack house. Yes, why Wouldn’t I be? You just seemed weird when we were talking to Ace and Candace,” she says. “No, I’m fine their daughter is beautiful.” “Oh, you’re my best friend, my sister. Don’t lie to me, please, she says. “Becca, it’s nothing.” I can feel Danica’s sadness. “Becca, you told me once that mates don’t usually reject the bond. That has to mean that you can reject your mate.”

I watch as my words sink in before her eyes snap to mine. “He’s your mate, isn’t he,” she says. “Becca, just answer my question.” “Oli, you can’t. You don’t understand everything about why Ace married Candace. He believes,” she starts to say, but I cut her off. “You are right, I don’t, but the fact still remains they are married and they have a daughter. A daughter who deserves not to have her family ripped apart. I won’t have her suffer the way I have.”

“Oli, Ace is the other half of your soul. The goddess chose him for you. You can’t just walk away from that.” she says. “I have to. I promised myself I would never do what Evelyn has done. I will not rip a family apart for my own happiness. Besides, he is human. He acted like he didn’t even feel the bond. He’ll never know that I was his mate.”

“That’s not true. He may not feel it as strongly as you do, but he feels it. Right now he is probably wondering why he is missing you when he doesn’t even know you. The more time you spend around him, the stronger his feelings for you will become,” she says. “Then it’s a good thing I won’t be here.”

“Oli, you don’t understand how much you’re hurting your wolf. How much you are hurting yourself. Della is little. It’s not the same as you growing up with two loving parents and having the carpet pulled from under you” she says. “You are wrong, it’s exactly the same. I’m going to deprive that little girl of the family she was meant to have. I need you to tell me what I need to do, Becca. Even if you don’t agree with my decision, its my decision to make.”

I can see she is torn, but I won’t break the promise I made to myself. Danica whimpers and my heart breaks knowing my decision affects her. “I’m sorry Danica. It would destroy me to be the reason Della’s family fell apart. I’m sorry the goddess chose me as your human.” “Hey, I’m not. I wouldn’t want any other human, Oli. I may be heartbroken, but that doesn’t mean I don’t understand why you’re doing this. I love you, no matter what, Oli,” she says.

My eyes meet Becca’s again. Tears run down her cheeks. I reach out and pull her into my arms, hugging her tightly. She really is my sister, despite not sharing blood. “You need to speak the words of rejection to him in order to sever the bond between you,”

she says. I let my own tears fall as I grieve the bond I'll never share with Ace. I pull back and wipe my tears quickly. "So, I just have to say I reject you, Ace, and our bond will be gone."

"No, you have to say I, Olivia Crocker, reject you, Ace Morris, as my mate. I know you have your mind set on this Oli, but you need to understand you'll never get a second chance if you reject Ace. You will always feel like a part of you is missing," she says. "I guess I'll just have to do what humans do. Find someone, date, and fall in love." Even thinking that thought makes my chest ache. I smile at Becca despite my heart breaking. "It still feels weird to say humans when I've always thought I was one of them," I say with a chuckle, trying to bring some levity to our conversation.

I just wanted to apologize for Collette She had no idea that Rain was your mate, Kevin' she says. "You know damn well that I never said Rain was my mate, Candace She doesn't have her wolf yet and that would be against the rules for me to claim her. Having said that your sister shouldn't be starting sh\*t with anyone in this pack, especially Rain and the alpha's daughter, Kevin says.

I'm just about to correct him when Candace speaks again. "We both know she isn't of the Alpha's blood. He may be claiming a human child, but that doesn't make her anything more than another member of the pack, she says. Becca clears her throat and three heads snap in our direction.

"Becca and Oli, it's good to see again. I was just apologizing to Rain and Kevin for Collette's behavior," she says. "I heard you perfectly fine, and you are absolutely right. My father was human, just like your husband.

So your daughter and I have a lot in common. Now if you'll excuse us, I'm tired," I say, pushing past her without another word.

We make our way through the pack house and up to the room I swore I'd never step foot in again. This time around it feels different. It feels like the safest place away from what I have to do tomorrow. The door closing behind me brings me out of my thoughts. "Are you sure about the rejection, Oli? I'm sure you can tell that Candace isn't exactly the nicest wolf. Just because Ace married her doesn't mean what they have is perfect."

"I'm sure. Whatever he feels for her was enough for them to have a child and get married. I won't be the reason that they break." After I'm showered, a wave of exhaustion rolls over me. I pull on a pajama short set and head out into the room. Becca is already showered and lying on the bed. I slide in next to her, turning off the bedside light. "Thank you, Becca." "For what, Oli" she asks. "For being there for me when I've felt all alone in this life. I don't know if I would have gotten through all of this without you."

"You never have to thank me for that, Oli. I told you, you are my sister. I would do anything for you," she says. It doesn't take long for me to fade into dream land. My

sleep is plagued with dreams of me with a swollen belly standing hand in hand with Ace. Pain has me dropping to the ground in my dream although the scream that comes from my mouth sounds like it's real. My body being shook wakes me out of sleep. "Oli, what's wrong?"

The pain is back, and it feels like my belly is on fire. "I don't know, but it hurts," I say as I grip my stomach. Something flashes in Becca's eyes as she stares at my stomach. "Becca, what the hell is happening?" "Ace is being intimate with Candace. Once we find our mates, we aren't supposed to let anyone else touch us," she says. Danica whimpers and, on top of the pain, I can feel her sadness. I'm not sure how long the pain lasts, but every moment is agony. Not just the pain but the thought of him touching her feels like I'm dying inside.

Once the pain subsides, I pass out. I wake up before the alarm on my phone goes off. Once I'm dressed, I decide to head downstairs to see if Rain is in the kitchen. I try not to think about the shit show of last night and the pain. The second I step inside, I regret it. Ace is standing near the fridge with a pair of gray sweats and a tight blue t-shirt that shows every inch of the chiseled muscle of his back. He turns just as I'm about to leave. "Oli, it's alright. I was just sneaking a snack after my workout. Why are you up so early, he asks.

thought maybe Rain would be here preparing for breakfast. I'll let you get back to your snack." "Oli, you seem upset. Are you sure everything is alright? I'm a good listener," he says, taking a step closer to me. I raise my hand to stop him. "I'm fine. In fact, I'm better than fine. After today, I'll never have to step foot in this place again." He seems shocked by my response. "What do you mean? You're part of the pack. You won't be living here."

"No, I have my own home and I never wanted this life. I need to get back to reality. Xavier insisted I join the pack, so I wouldn't be considered a rogue or, honestly, I wouldn't have been here last night." "I'm sorry to hear that. I know that Connor and Becca will be sad" he says. "I'll still see Becca and Connor. I really need to get going. Take care of yourself and your family Ace." "Of course," he says. He looks like he wants to say more, but instead he turns back toward the fridge.

I look up towards the heavens and straighten my spine. I look back at Ace, who is once again rummaging in the fridge. "I, Olivia Crocker, reject you, Ace Morris, as my mate" I say, forcing the words out barely loud enough to be heard. When the last word leaves my mouth it feels like my heart is being ripped in two.

Ace groans and braces himself against the fridge. Everything in me wants to comfort him, but instead I force myself back to the room. It's over. Now it's time for me to figure out how to forget him.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[ 1,918 words ]

Five Years Later

Olivia POV

“You are a very pretty young woman. I hate to see you working so hard, Edith says. Edith is one of my frequent fliers here at the hospital. Most of the time, I think she comes to the ER because she is lonely. This time though, she actually needs medical attention after a pretty nasty fall. “I love what I do, Edith. Besides, if I wasn’t here, how could you try to set me up with your grandson every time you visit?”

She smiles, and I pat her hand that is resting on her lap before heading for the door. It’s hard to believe I’ve already been working here at Regional Hospital for a year. When my nursing instructor first recommended I come here for a job because of the state-of-the-art emergency department, I was dead set against it. The last time I stepped foot in this hospital, I lost my father. Becca is the one that convinced me that my father wouldn’t want me to make a decision based on past pain.

It took me a long time to get past the anger and pain of the past. Becca is my person now. She is the one that has my back no matter what happens. She is truly my sister even if we don’t share blood. It took me a long time to forgive Connor completely, but our relationship is almost what it was before our family imploded. I’ve hardly spoken to Evelyn and Xavier over the last five years. She has continued to try, but I just can’t bring myself to forgive her.

I’ve let go of the anger I had towards her and Xavier, but I can’t bring myself to want a relationship outside of Alpha and Luna. I may understand the pull now to be with your destined mate, but she knew that could happen before she met my father. She chose to date my father and fall in love. Knowing what I know now, she should have waited for her mate. My father deserved better and for that reason I can’t forgive her.

Especially after I walked away from my own mate. I thought about the pup that wasn’t even mine before my own happiness. She and her daddy still haunt my dreams. The phone vibrating in my pocket brings me out of my thoughts. I smile when I see Becca’s name flash on the screen. “Hey Becca, what’s up?” “Hi Oli. “How is work,” she asks. Despite the fact that she ignored my question, I still answer her question. “It’s awesome. It’s hard to believe it’s been a year. I’m so glad that I listened to you. I love working here.”

“I’m so glad you do,” she says. I can sense she is stalling, so whatever she has to tell me must be difficult. “Now, how about you tell me why you really called me, because I can tell it’s not just to catch up considering I saw you a few days ago.” There is silence for a few seconds before I hear her deep intake of breath. “Oli, you’re going to be

receiving a pack link from Xavier.” “Why was there a rogue attack? Is everyone alright? Is Connor alright?”

“Oli, there was no rogue attack. Your brother is fine. Xavier has decided to hand the Alpha title over to Connor.” I’m not sure what to say, so I say the first thing that comes into my head. “That’s great. I still don’t understand why you’re acting so weird.” “Oli, your mom is pregnant,” she says. I don’t know why the thought of her having a pup with Xavier brings all the feelings of her destroying our family back to the surface.

“Becca, I really need to go. I’m at work,” I say. I can hear her saying my name, but I can’t respond. I cut the call and make my way to the staff lounge. My phone vibrates in my hand, but I quickly shut it off. I step into the room and I have never been more grateful to be alone. I don’t know why this hurts so much. They have been married for five years. Hurry, wipe them from in my eyes. After a few seconds, I get asof vnukia zemrat tem fent Danica wants to sy omning, bo tos grateful the dog wf has been the gatit pit outside of Barre, she is my best friend, save truly or is she will try to comfort me ready to face these feelings right now I need to get through the rest of my shit I’m just about...

I debate about trying to keep my block in place, but I know that with just and with an in-person visit, which is the last thing I want right now. “Olivia,” he says I’m startled at first I was expecting a pack link, best instead he is linking me individually. “What can I do for you, Alpha? I know he doesn’t appreciate my use of his title, but as usual, I don’t care.

‘Olivia, I have already alerted the pack, but I felt that you, as part of the family, deserved to have a private link. I will be passing your brother the Alpha title in four days. As a member of the Alpha family and pack, you are expected to attend. Although I’m hoping that you will want to attend to celebrate your brother becoming Alpha. Besides, your mother would really like to talk to you. She has something important she wants to tell you,” he says. He turns me right back into the angry teenager who wants to rage at him and Evelyn.

I tighten my fists at my sides. I’m just about to scream through the link, I’m am not his or Evelyn’s family when the door to the room opens. It has me breaking the link without ever responding. I look up and suddenly wish I was home with a glass of wine. “Olivia, I was wondering where you got off to. I was hoping we could talk. I was wondering if you thought anymore about my offer. Dr. Edwards asks. Everything in me, with the way I feel right now, wants to tell him to f\*\*k off. Since he is the head doctor in the ER, that isn’t in my best interest.

He can make my work life miserable and I wouldn’t doubt he would. “As flattered as I am Dr. Edwards by your offer, I think it’s best if we keep our relationship professional. I wouldn’t want to complicate things.” He is an attractive man, but he is far too full of himself for me to want to date. I also meant what I said about not dating people I work with. Besides, despite the years that have passed, I still think about Ace every day.

The pain of breaking the bond has lessened, but I still have no interest in dating. I think I'm going to have to force myself to just rip the Band-Aid off and try one of those damn dating sites that Joanne keeps hounding me about. She is another nurse that works in the ER. She is old enough to be my mother, but she acts more like a teenage girl than I did. "Olivia," Dr. Edwards says my name and I realize that based on his tone, it's not the first time he spoke.

"Sorry Dr. Edwards, I have a lot on my mind. Thank you again for the offer, but my break is over so I need to get back to my patients." "Olivia, I told you to call me Nicholas. I'll let you get back to work, but I'm not giving up. I think we would be amazing together. I think you would agree if you just give me a chance," he says. I bite my bottom lip before I scream that hell will freeze over before I agree to date him. Instead, I just sidestep him and rush out the door.

I manage to finish the rest of my shift without running into Edwards. I make my way out to my car, still reeling from Becca's earlier news. Why is this upsetting me so much? Evelyn hasn't felt like my mother for years, but this just feels like another betrayal of the family I thought we would always have growing up. I would never hold Evelyn's sins against an innocent pup, but I don't know if I can hold my tongue when I see her again. I don't want to hold all this anger inside me. That's why I stay away from the pack.

As I drive back to my house, I imagine Xavier having a tantrum about me cutting the link, and it makes me smile. That is until I pull onto my street and see the familiar SUV. F\*\*k, why can't this day just end? I pull into my driveway and take a deep cleansing breath before I push open my door. I look up to find Xavier and Evelyn sitting on my porch. When I reach the porch, my mother stands and takes a few steps toward me.

I take a step back. We do this every time she sees me. I think some day she hopes I'll let her hug me, but I won't. There is too much pain between us. "Olivia, why the hell did you cut the link without answering me," Xavier says. "Should I have let the person that walked into the room see me linking? Aren't you all about protecting our kind from humans finding out about us? Should I have told him to hold on while I talked to the Alpha of the Red Moon," I say, my voice laced with irritation,

\*Olivia, please, we didn't come here to fight, Evelyn says. "You didn't need to come here at all. I know I have no choice but to attend Connor's ceremony. You could have linked me just like any other pack member." "Olivia, you aren't any other pack member. No matter how much you wish you weren't, you are my daughter. I had hoped that after all this time you could find it in your heart to forgive me. I live with the guilt of what happened to your father every day, but losing you is what hurts me the most," she says, tears streaming down her cheeks.

"We all have choices to make Evelyn. You made yours and I've made mine. I come to the pack when I have no choice, because I am not a part of your family. I am just another pack member. I will be there in four days because Danica recognizes the

authority of her Alpha and to support my brother, but those are the only two reasons.”  
“Olivia, please. I’m pregnant,” she says with pleading eyes.

I fight the tears of anger that want to fall. “Congratulations Alpha and Luna.” “Olivia, this has gone on long enough. I will not have you stressing your mother while she is carrying our pup,” Xavier says. “Unfortunately, Alpha she is creating her own stress by coming here. Nothing is going to change because she’s having a pup.”

“I’m not miraculously going to forget the past to make either of you feel better. I’ve done everything you’ve ordered as Alpha but that is all you are to me, Alpha and Luna. Now if you’ll excuse me, I’ve had a sh\*\*y day and this isn’t helping. I will see you both in four days.” I step past them and close the door behind me. Sometimes I wish I had just stayed a rogue.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[ 1,930 words ]

Ace POV

Daddy, look at my dress, Della says as she twirls around in our kitchen. Becca has been a godsend since Candace left a year ago I honestly thought she and I were in love, but she proved me wrong the minute an Alpha from another pack showed interest in her during a pack visit.

I could feel her pulling away from me despite how she insisted we were destined for each other, When Candace told me we were mates, I was so happy. I never expected as a human that I would have a fated mate. I should have known it was all a lie. The day she told me she was leaving me for Alpha Roman, I felt like I couldn’t breathe.

Flashback

“Ace, we need to talk,” Candace says as she walks into the kitchen and takes a seat at our table. A feeling of unease sweeps through me. After our huge fight last night, because she refused to sleep in our bed, I can only imagine what this conversation will be about. “Ace, I’m leaving you,” she says. I turn to face her, expecting to see some kind of emotion in her eyes, but there’s nothing. “What do you mean? We are mates.”

“Ace, do you really believe that the goddess chose a human to be my mate? I’ve always liked you since I was a pup. I wanted you. You were hot and, based on everything you told me, you were going to be the pack doctor. You were a better choice than the omega the goddess saddled me with. Oh, and the s\*x was amazing, so I told you we were mates,” she says.

Bile rises in my throat as her words sink in. “You lied to me. You told me we were mates. What about Della?” S

he throws her head back and laughs. “Ace, you’ve learned nothing about wolves in all the time you’ve spent here. Alpha Roman has offered to make me his Luna.

If Connor wasn’t such a sap for the bond, I would have pursued him, but instead he accepted that fat a\*\* Becca when he could have had someone like me,” she says. “Who the f\*\*k are you? How could you be so disgusting?” Her eyes flash black, and I know Anya is at the surface. “Be careful, Ace. You may be strong for a human, but you will never be a wolf. You will always just be a weak human,” she says.

“F\*\*k you Candace. You are pathetic. What am I supposed to tell our daughter? Her mother is a power-hungry wh\*re who only cares about a title.” “Honestly, I don’t care what you tell her. Roman will never accept her, so she is all yours,” she says as she stands.

“That’s it then. You can walk away from your own pup for that ba\*\*ard.” A smile spreads across her face that has the sick feeling returning with a vengeance. “She only exists because I wanted to make sure you never figured out we weren’t mates. I never wanted a pup, I just wanted you. Now I don’t. Have a nice life Ace,” she says, before she walks down the hallway and out of our lives like we meant nothing to her.

Flashback Ends

“Daddy, do you like my dress? Aunt Becca said it makes me look like a princess,” she says, bringing me out of the memory. “Of course, it does, You always look beautiful, but that dress does make you look like a Disney princess. She twirls one more time before she launches herself at me. I will never regret being with Candace because she gave me Della, but the love I felt for her is long gone. All I want to do now is focus on being the best father to Della and a great pack doctor.

A knock on the door has Della squealing and squirming out of my arms. She rushes to the door and throws herself at Becca the minute she opens the door. There is my princess. Are you almost ready for the ceremony tonight, she asks. “I am ready. I can’t believe you become Luna today. Do I have to call you Luna from now on instead of Aunt Becca,” she asks. Becca sets Della on her feet and crouches so they are eye to eye.

“Nothing changes because I become Luna. You and your daddy are my family even if we don’t share blood. I’ll always be your auntie.” Becca says. “Did you hear that, daddy? Aunt Becca will always be my auntie,” she says as she bounces like she has springs in her feet.

“I heard. That’s because you are such a special little girl. Everyone loves you.” “He’s right princess you are daddy,” special. Why don’t you go get those sparkly shoes that we got to match your dress while I talk to your she says. Once she is out of earshot,

Becca steps closer to me. "She isn't the only one that is special, Ace. Don't let what that b\*\*ch did make you feel like you aren't the amazing man you are. Someday you are going to find the woman the goddess actually chose for you, and she is going to love you and Della the way you both deserve," she says.

"I'm not worried about love or mates, Becca. I'm just focusing on Della. She is what is important. Besides, I'm just a human even if I live among wolves." She goes to open her mouth, but I pull her for a hug. "Thank you for being here for me and Della."

A low growl has me chuckling. I look up to see Connor stepping into my kitchen. He and Kevin have become the best of friends to me, but I never miss the opportunity to tease him. "No need to growl Alpha. We can share your beautiful mate."

He grabs Becca, pulling her out of my arms. "Don't make my first act as Alpha be to replace the pack doctor," he says. "Uncle Connor," Della squeals as she launches herself at him.

"There is my princess. Are you ready for the ceremony in your pretty dress," he asks. I smile seeing how much love surrounds my daughter, even if she doesn't have her mother's love. I can't fight the twinge of sadness, but I quickly push thoughts of Candace out of my mind.

Olivia POV

As I pull up to the gate, a feeling of excitement washes over me. I know it's not my own emotion, but I feel it just the same. Danica is always excited about the possibility of shifting and running. As much as I refused to live in the pack, I made a point of returning weekly to allow Danica time in her own form. The only saving grace is the fact that Ace is human. We never ran into him during our visits. Despite the broken bond, I have often thought of him over the last five years.

The guard bears his neck to me before the gate opens. I want to scream at him that I'm not part of the Alpha family, but it will do no good. Now that Connor is set to be Alpha, they won't ever stop bearing their neck to me. I park my car and make my way toward the pack house. As soon as I step inside, I'm lifted off my feet in a bear hug. "Kevin, I'm wearing a damn dress," I say as I hear Rain giggle next to us.

I smile when I see her in her peach sundress with her prominent baby bump. Rain and Becca are still my best friends. They often visit me at the house but I haven't seen her in a month. He sets me on my feet and presses a kiss on my forehead, "I haven't seen you in a month because of Beta training. I've missed my bestie," he says. I roll my eyes because Connor is his bestie.

"I missed you Kevin, but I missed my bestie Rain more," I say pulling her into a hug. I laugh at the pout on his face. "I missed you too. I hated being away from you, Becca,

and the pack,” she says. Kevin insisted she go with him, especially since she is carrying his pup I pull back and put my hands on her belly

How is my niece or nephew doing in there?” “He or she is doing just fine. Actually, we are supposed to find out what we are having tomorrow. Maybe you could stay tonight and we can celebrate tomorrow, she asks,

Rain, you know, that’s not really a good idea. As much as things have gotten better with Connor, I still don’t really want to be around Evelyn and Xavier. I may have let the anger go but nothing will ever be the same between us.” “I know, but we have our own wing of the pack house now. You can stay with us after the ceremony, Kevin says.

“Come on Oli. We can get two runs in before we head home” Danica pleads. “Alright, I’ll stay the night.” Rain squeals and pulls me in for another hug. “It looks like they will allow anyone to attend this ceremony, Roman. I didn’t know rogues were invited to such a prestigious event,” says a snarky female voice from behind me. A low growl from Rain has me turning toward the voice. “Did you just growl at me omega,” Candace asks, taking a step toward her.

A large man that is clearly not Ace places his hand on her arm. “Don’t bother with wolves that are clearly beneath you, my Luna. Besides, we are guests in this pack,” he says. “You would do well to keep your Luna under control, Alpha Roman. I’ll make sure to let Alpha Conner know of her disrespect to his Beta Female. Besides, Olivia, is no rogue which your Luna very well knows. She is the Alpha’s sister. She didn’t get her rank on her back like some wolves,” Kevin says.

A loud growl fills the foyer and Roman’s eyes turn black. “What the hell is going on here,” a deep unfamiliar voice startles everyone. I’m shocked to see it’s Connor, even though it doesn’t sound like him. It must be a mix of his and Cosmo’s voice.

“Alpha Connor, your Beta just disrespected my Luna. I want him punished,” Roman says. “From what I heard Alpha Roman your Luna disrespected my sister and Beta Female. I believe that you both owe my pack member and Beta an apology or I can rip up the alliance you so desperately wanted me to sign after the ceremony,” Connor says. I can see the pr\*ck wants to argue, but instead he simply nods.

“My apologies for our disrespect. Both myself and my Luna were out of line,” he says. through gritted teeth. Candace goes to open her mouth, clearly not happy about what Roman said, but his look has her closing it quickly. “Now why don’t you join the other guests. Hopefully there won’t be any more issues while you are in my pack” Connor says. “Of course” he says and they both step out of the pack house.

My mind is reeling. Where is Ace and Della? Why is she with that a\*\*hat? “Oli, I’m so glad you’re here” Connor says, halting my inner monologue. I turn offering him a smile. He quickly pulls me in for a hug and I hug him back. I’m happy for him and for Becca.

“Connor what the hell,” says a voice I never thought I’d hear again says from behind me. My body freezes and Danica whimpers.

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[ 1,894 words ]

Ace POV

Becca insisted on taking bella to pick out a “pretty bracelet to go with her princess dress. I smile thinking about how happy my daughter is despite everything that’s happened, I make my way to the pack house from our cottage. A few days after Candace left, I asked Alpha Xavier to move into a smaller cottage with two bedrooms. We had originally wanted a bigger home to expand our family, but that isn’t necessary now.

I shake those thoughts away as I step into the pack house. I’m shocked by the number of people standing in the foyer. My eyes move through the group until they land on Connor hugging a woman with long sandy blonde hair. I can only see her back, but it is clearly not his mate. “Connor, what the hell?” I watch the woman’s body stiffen before he sets her on her feet.

When she turns, I feel like the air is knocked from my lungs. It’s Olivia, but she isn’t a seventeen-year-old girl anymore that I met years ago. She is a beautiful woman in a dress that makes it hard for me to focus on the people around me. “You remember my sister, Olivia, don’t you Ace,” Connor says, pulling me back into the moment. “I do. It’s nice to see you again, Oliva.”

I’d never dare tell anyone this, but I’ve thought of her often over the last five years. There was something about her that wouldn’t let me forget her. A squeal has me looking at my daughter barreling down the stairs.” Della, slow down so you don’t get hurt.” “Mommy,” she squeals and the blood freezes in my veins.

I knew there was a possibility that she would be here today, but I had hoped that she would think about our daughter even if she cared nothing for me and stay away. I’m just about to turn when Della launches herself at Olivia, almost knocking her to the ground. “Della,” I say in warning, just as Olivia scoops her up in her arms. “Della, Bella,” I’ve missed you, Olivia says. I swear my heart starts to beat faster just seeing her holding my daughter. I quickly move toward them, offering to take Della from her arms.

Della wraps her arms tighter around Olivia's neck, effectively stopping my effort. "Della, why would you call Olivia mommy? You know that isn't true." "All my friends have a mommy. I want her to be my mine," she says like I just asked the stupidest question she has ever heard. "Baby, you can't just pick a new mommy." Tears form in my daughter's eyes and a low growl has me looking at Olivia. Her eyes are flicking back and forth between hers and her wolf's.

She bends, setting Della on her feet so she can look into her eyes. "Hey Della, how about if we be best friends," she asks. Della wipes the tears from her cheeks with the back of her hands. "We can be best friends," she asks in her tiny voice. "You bet. You know what else my friends and family get to call me Oli, isn't that right, Connor," she says. The room goes silent as Connor stares down at Olivia.

I'm not sure exactly what's happening, but Connor looks like he is fighting tears of his own. "That's right, Della. Oli is my sister." "I want to be best friends, Oli" she says, wrapping her arms around Olivia's neck. This time I look up to see that Connor is hugging Becca, who can't stop smiling. "Alright, I'm not sure why you are all standing here, but it's time to make our way to the training field for the ceremony," the Alpha says as he and the Luna step into the foyer.

"Daddy, I want to sit with my new best friend Oli" Della says. "Della, I'm not sure," I start to say, but Olivia silences me with her hand on mine. I swear I feel the strangest sensation when our skin touches. "I would love to have Della sit with me during the ceremony and you, of course. I'm sure you want to be close to her since I'm essentially a stranger, she says. I nod, my mind still focused on the little tingles I felt on my skin.

Olivia takes Della's hand and heads for the door that leads to the pack yard. I follow behind them as we make our way up the path to the training field. Kevin passes by me and reaches for Olivia's arm. As soon as he touches her, an unfamiliar feeling of anger settles in my stomach. Why the hell do I care if Kevin touches Olivia? As soon as he finishes whatever he had to say, he heads back to join Rain. Olivia turns to face me, a look of irritation on her face.

"I guess I'm being ordered to sit up front." "That's alright, Della, and I will just take seats toward the back like we had planned." "I still want you two to sit with me. I was just hoping we could sit in the back," she says, before she starts to walk down the aisle again. We are almost to the front row when a low growl has my head turning just in time to see my ex-wife staring daggers at Olivia. How f\*\*king dare she growl at Olivia?

I'm not sure why her growling at Olivia makes me so irate, but it does. It has to be because she is disrespecting the Alpha family. How dare she step foot in the Red Moon to begin with but then to be angry at someone who has done nothing to her? I move closer to Olivia, placing my hand on the small of her back without thinking. She stiffens at first before her shoulders relax. Why does this feel so natural?

“Daddy, we get to sit in the front with Olivia,” Della says, bringing me out of my thoughts. I smile down at my daughter her excitement contagious. “I know. You have to be a good girl during the ceremony. We have to be very quiet, alright sweat pea.” “Yes daddy. I’ll be very quiet. We have to be very quiet, Olivia,” she whispers. The smile on Olivia’s face as we take our seats with Della between us makes warmth spread through my chest. What the hell is wrong with me today? Focus on Della, Ace, I say to myself.

## Olivia POV

I swear I have to focus on every step I take on the training field, knowing that Ace is this close to me. If the bond is broken, why the hell do I still feel this way? When Ace places his hand against my back, Danica whimpers and I stiffen. Just knowing, his hand is on me even through my clothes has my stomach flipping. What the hell is wrong with me? The sound of Xavier’s voice has me looking toward the stage.

I smile when I see Becca standing next to Connor in a beautiful blue gown. She is going to make a wonderful Luna. Her love and support is one of the only reasons I got through everything that happened when I was seventeen. “Welcome pack members and honored guests to the Red Moon Alpha Ceremony. It has been my honor to serve the pack for all these years as your Alpha. As you all know, I found my mate and Luna five years ago,” he says.

“Not only did I find my mate, but I was lucky enough to be gifted a strong, capable son from our union. It is with great pleasure that I pass my title to him today. My Luna would like to say a few words before we make it official,” Xavier says. “It has been my pleasure to serve the pack for the last five years as Luna. I have been blessed in my life with a handsome son, Connor, and a beautiful daughter, Olivia,” she says.

“They are more than I ever thought I would have in this life, but the goddess has seen fit to bless Alpha Xavier and myself with another pup,” she says, placing her hand on her belly. The crowd breaks out in cheers. I’m not sure how to react, but Della’s excitement about the new pup has a smile creeping onto my face.

“You are going to be a big sister, Oli. I wish I was a big sister,” she says. “I am going to be a big sister,” I say, fighting the tears forming in the corner of my eyes as I think about a pup that will be part of me and Connor.

When I was a little girl, I always wanted to be a big sister. My parents tried for a while, but it just didn’t happen. My dad used to say that he had two amazing kids, so he couldn’t be greedy if God didn’t give him anymore. The memory makes me smile. I look back at the stage and my mother is smiling at me from where she has retaken her seat.

My eyes move back to Xavier, who speaks again. Connor Crocker, step forward he says with the dagger and thalice in his bands. Connor comes to stand in front of him. “Connor Crocker, make your vow to the pack, he says. 1, Connor Charles Crocker, vow to put the pack’s needs before my own. I vow to rule the pack with fairness and

strength. I vow to uphold wolf law and hold those accountable that break it," Connor says.

Xavier cuts his hand and gives Connor the chalice. "As of today you are the Red Moon's Alpha, Connor Grocker Xavier says. Connor drinks before turning to face the crowd. He seems to stumble a little but gets his bearings quickly. He smiles down at me before I feel the nudge of a link. "I love you, Oli," he says.

This time the tears fall that I attempted to hold back earlier. "I love you too, Connor, or should I say Alpha." "Don't you dare," he says. Xavier clearing his throat has Connor stepping back into his Alpha persona. "Rebecca Crocker, please step forward," Xavier says. Rebecca moves to stand next to Connor and in front of Xavier. He repeats everything he did with Connor. Once Becca makes her vow, they turn together to face the pack.

"Red Moon, welcome your new Alpha Connor and Luna Rebecca. As is tradition, the pack will be led by their new Alpha and Luna in a pack run. All guests can head into the pack house for the banquet. All pack members of shifting age are expected to join," Xavier says. "Oli, can we do the pack run? I want to run with Maya and Cosmo," Danica says. I look over at Della and Ace, hating the thought of leaving them but knowing that Danica needs this. Besides, I want to run with my brother and Becca. "Of course," I say.

"Della, I have to go with the wolves, but I can find you when it's over if you want?" "It's alright, Olivia. Thank you for letting us sit with you, but you don't have to entertain her all night. We will head inside," he says, scooping her up. As I watch him walk back toward the path that leads to the pack house, the ache that had lessened over the years is back with a vengeance.

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