

My Promised Rejection –

Chapter 6 - 10

[1,684 words]

Charles POV

How did everything go to sh*t in the blink of an eye? How did I lose everything? I thought what we had was stronger than this, but I was very wrong. I put the bottle to my lips and take a long pull. I know I shouldn't want to be numb, but I do. This house is so empty. I can't stand the silence. I not only lost my wife but my kids are gone.

My Oli girl looked destroyed the day that damn judge gave custody to Evelyn. I knew the outcome before we even got there. The b**ch was a wolf, but I couldn't tell Oli that. We kept so much from her. Why didn't we just tell her? I've hurt my daughter by trying to protect her. I thought we had time but we didn't. I feel the alcohol as it settles in my veins.

My mind wanders back to the day I met Evelyn. She was so beautiful. I had an appointment at the law office where she was a paralegal. The man that was her boss was a friend of mine in college. With my company starting to turn a profit, I needed to make sure that I had a lawyer on retainer, so Greg just made sense.

The minute I saw her, I knew she was it for me. There was something in her eyes that just drew me in. The rest of that week I came up with reasons to visit Greg until I finally got up the nerve to ask her out. I felt amazing when she said yes. We dated for six months before she finally agreed to move in with me. We had our ups and downs, but Evelyn was always my better half.

The day before we got married, she asked me to take a drive. I was never so nervous in my life. I thought she had changed her mind. When we pulled up to the walking trail outside of town, my heart started to race. This is where I asked her to marry me. Did she want to end it in the same place? We reached the same clearing where I had set up our picnic. She turned to face me and I could see the fear and apprehension in her eyes.

"Charles, I have to show you something before we get married tomorrow," she said. "So you still want to marry me?" She looked at me like I had grown ten heads. "Of course I do, but I have been keeping something from you. After you see what it is, you may not want to marry me," she said. I pulled her into my arms and kissed her like she was the air I needed to breathe. "There is nothing that will make that happen," I said and she took a step back.

When she shifted into Jenna, I thought I was having a dream. Needless to say, I was shocked, but I was right and we were married the next day. We were married for a year when she got pregnant with Connor. That was when she told me about mates. She wanted me to know that if our kids had wolves they would have a mate chosen by the goddess. It was the only fight I remember us having that scared me.

After she reassured me of how much she loved me, I buried that fear. When Oli was born, I was wrapped around her little finger. I love both my kids the same, but she was my Oli girl. I never thought that all those years of happiness could be destroyed in a single meeting. With the kids almost adults, Evelyn decided it was time to go back to work. Greg had lost his paralegal so it seemed like perfect timing. Now I wonder how much was the goddess's doing.

Why would she take them from me? Is it because I'm human, and she was never meant to be mine? Tears stream down my cheeks as I remember the day my world fell apart. The sound of the door opening has me stepping out of the kitchen. I move toward my beautiful wife, but she steps back before I can kiss her. "Evelyn, what's wrong," I ask, worried that something happened to her.

Her eyes meet mine and I swear my heart stops beating. "Charles, I met my mate today," she says. I immediately felt like the air was knocked out of my lungs. She wraps her arms around me and I let her even though in my heart I knew nothing would ever be the same. She tried to fight the bond, but three weeks later I could see the guilt on her face the minute she stepped through the door. "I'm so sorry, Charles. I tried" she said. I finish the bottle and it doesn't take long for the numbness to replace the memories and pain. I'm surrounded by darkness, but at least there is no more pain.

Two Weeks Later

Olivia POV

The sound of the phone on my nightstand ringing wakes me from a deep sleep. When I look at the display, I see it's three in the morning. The number is one I've never seen before. I'm about to let it go to voicemail when something inside me has me answering. "Hello" I say. "Hello, is this Oli" a female voice asks. "Yes, who is this?" "My name is Miranda. I'm a nurse at Mercy Hospital. Are you related to Charles Crocker," she asks, and my blood runs cold in my veins.

“Yes, I’m his daughter. What’s going on?” “Maybe I should talk to your mother about what’s happening. Do you have a number for her,” she asks. “My parents are divorced. I am all the family my dad has left. Just tell me what’s going on.” “Your father was brought in earlier after a wellness check was done on him by the police. His employees were concerned he hadn’t been to work for days.

When the police arrived, he was unconscious, and they weren’t sure how long he had been like that.” Tears stream down my cheeks. “Is he alright now?” “I’m afraid not. His blood alcohol level was severely elevated, and the doctor feels that he has alcohol poisoning. We have tried to treat the poisoning, but he hasn’t woken up yet. The doctor asked me to call you so you could be here in case something happens,” she says.

I feel like I can’t breathe. Does she mean he might die? “Oli, are you still there,” she asks. “I am. I’m on my way. I should be there within the hour. Please don’t let my dad die” I say, not being able to hold back the sob. As soon as I hang up, I dial Rebecca’s number. She is the only person I trust in this place. “Oli, what’s wrong,” she asks, panic in her voice. I quickly explain everything to her. “Get dressed and meet me outside the front door” she says.

My shoulders sag in relief before I throw on a pair of jeans and a sweatshirt. I open the door, praying no one is awake. The hall is quiet, and I move quickly down the hall toward the stairs. Once I make it through the foyer, I push open the front door slowly hoping it’s not alarmed. Amazingly enough, nothing happens as I step out into the cold night air. “Oli” Rebecca says, scaring the sh*t out of me.

I follow her down to an area of parked cars. “Your lucky my friend, is at the gate tonight, or we would have had to wake up the Alpha. I told him what’s happening, and he agreed to help us,” she says. I don’t want my mother or Connor to know what’s happening. They don’t deserve to know after what they have done.

“Will he get in trouble?” “No, I told him to tell Xavier I lied about having permission. My uncle won’t punish me too harshly,” she says. I stop in my tracks. “Did you just say that

Xavier is your uncle?” “Come on Oli. We don’t have time. I’ll answer your questions on the drive to the hospital.”

A few minutes later we pull through the gate. My heart feels like it’s going to beat out of my chest. As we drive away from my prison, the tears begin to fall again. I can’t lose my dad. Rebecca tells me how her father and Xavier were brothers. When her parents died, Xavier took her in. I don’t have time to focus on that as we pull up to the front of the hospital.

“I can’t tell you what this means to me, Rebecca. I’ll call you as soon as I know anything,” I say pulling her into a hug. “Oh no way am I leaving you here by yourself. I know we haven’t known each other long, Oli, but I consider you my sister. Let’s go check on your dad” she says. We make our way inside and the nurse tells us where my dad’s room is. We take the elevator and make our way to room 305. When I step inside, my knees nearly buckle at the sight of him.

He is hooked up to machines and tubes surround him. My strong dad looks weak and frail. I say a silent prayer that he survives this. I’m not leaving him again. I don’t care what the damn judge says. Rebecca leads me over to the chair that’s next to his bed. She places her hand on my shoulder as I just stare at him.

“Mr. Crocker, my name is Rebecca. I’m your son’s mate and your daughter’s best friend. I’m going to need you to wake up so I can meet you. Oli is here, and she needs you” she says. I don’t have time to ask her what the hell a mate is because it’s not important right now. She leans down and presses a kiss on his head and then mine. She takes a seat across the room and I take my dad’s hand into mine. “Daddy, please wake up. Don’t leave me.”

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

[1,395 words]

Xavier POV

I stare at my reflection in the bathroom mirror. This is the first night that Evelyn has let me back in our bed after I f**ked up royally with Olivia. The minute I walked away from her room that night, I felt like sh*t. Not to mention that I totally pissed off Evelyn. This is not how I expected my mateship to go. I never expected walking into Greg’s office that day to find my mate. I actually had given up on the chance of finding her. Most wolves find their mate not long after they turn eighteen.

Most Alphas would have taken a fated mate by forty–five, but I couldn't bring myself to do it. I have dreamed of having my goddess given mate from the time I was a teen pup. My parents were fated mates and shared a bond that I hoped to have when I was grown. In fact, I turned down more she–wolves over the years because I felt like I was betraying my mate. I'm not saying I've never found pleasure in a woman, but not one I would consider making my Luna. I think that's why I was even more upset about Evelyn.

To find out that she had taken a human mate was worse than the emptiness of not having her. It didn't stop me from wanting her though. I couldn't turn my back on the bond no matter what her circumstances. I knew she felt the bond, but she was torn. She fought it for weeks before she couldn't fight it anymore.

Atlas didn't give a sh*t about her human mate, but I knew that accepting her was going to hurt not only her but her entire family. Part of me wished I had never walked in to find her that day, but the bigger part of me knew that I couldn't live without her. She was the other half of my soul. Now that she is mine, I'll never let her go. I know Connor hasn't accepted me completely, but Oli thinks I'm devil reincarnated.

I wish I could convince her that I'm not. No one wanted to cause this pain to her or Charles. I know I'm coming off as harsh, but I am not used to her level of disrespect. No one in the pack would dare to speak to me or my Luna the way she does. I'm trying my best to understand, but every time she lashes out it infuriates me.

Atlas and I have accepted both her and Connor as our pups, but I don't think she'll ever accept me as more than the evil ba**ard that destroyed her family. I take a deep breath to prepare myself for my discussion with Evelyn. We talked about Connor's idea that I shouldn't be there when she told Olivia about us being wolves, but I still don't think it's a good idea. We had tabled the conversation but the longer we wait the angrier Olivia becomes.

I know Connor doesn't understand why I insist on her being here to shift, but Atlas feels it's necessary. I trust my wolf and if he thinks she needs to be surrounded by the pack for her first shift, then I have to insist that it happen.

I push open the door to find my beautiful mate sitting up in bed with a photo album on her lap. I fight back the surge of anger that flows through me. I know she is probably looking at pictures of Oli but my stupid jealousy doesn't care. All I can focus on is the fact that the pictures include Charles. He isn't the villain in this, but I still worry that the love she shared with him will overshadow our bond. I'm not used to being so unsure of myself.

Knowing she fell in love with him without the magic of the bond was a hard pill to swallow. I know she wouldn't even have looked in my direction had it not been for the fact that we were fated mates. I love her so much. I can't lose her I move closer to the bed, and she looks up at me with tears in her eyes.

“She is going to hate me forever. I’ve lost my daughter, Xavier, I’ve lost my family,” she says. I slide in next to her and pull her into my arms. She buries her face into my chest and sobs. “She has always been a daddy’s girl. Charles is an amazing father, and he doesn’t deserve any of this. I feel so guilty, Xavier. I know that’s not fair to you, but I do,” she says. Atlas growls but I block him out.

This isn’t about us right now. Our mate is hurting and, no matter the cause, we need to be there for her. “You don’t deserve this either, Evelyn. You know that you would never have looked my way was it not for the bond. As much as it hurts me, you loved him. Part of me is glad that you had someone that loved you when I couldn’t be there, but the other part is jealous. Jealous that you will never truly love me the way you love him.”

She pulls back, looking into my eyes. “I won’t lie to you, Xavier. I loved Charles with all my heart. He is a good man who made me forget that I was destined for someone else. He gave me my pups, who are my whole world. I know you are struggling with Oli’s feelings, but imagine how hard this is for her. Imagine having someone take the most important person in your life away from you. Charles and I only had one true fight in the time we were together, and it was before she was born. She has no idea she is a wolf or that mates exist,” she says.

“Why didn’t you tell her from the time she was a small pup?” “Charles and I went round and round about when was the right time to tell Connor and Olivia what I truly was. What they were but we were afraid Xavier. We were living among humans. Had they let it slip as pups, people would likely think it was just a pup’s imagination, but what if they didn’t? You know that despite not having our wolves we are stronger and faster. We couldn’t take the chance,” she says.

“I still don’t understand why you didn’t move into the pack with your parents. I would have found you so much sooner. Then Olivia and Connor would be my pups.” Anger flashes in her eyes, and she tries to move out of my arms. I tighten my grip, keeping her in place. “Your father wouldn’t allow us to move here because we were outsiders that were deserting our pack. It was only after my father pleaded and told him about the abuse that was happening that he allowed us to carry the pack scent,” she says.

“As much as you hate it, Xavier, I love the time I had with Charles. Those feelings may be lessened because you were always meant to be mine, but I wouldn’t take back a moment of the time I had with my family. The pups were always meant to be his. I’m sorry that hurts you, but it’s the truth. I love you, Xavier, and I’ve made my choice, but it doesn’t change my past,” she says.

“I love you, Evelyn. I hate that choosing me is causing you, Connor, Olivia, and even Charles this pain. If you told me today that letting you go was the only way to ease your pain as much as it would kill me, I would. I would go against Atlas and break the bond.” Atlas growls but I know that he agrees with me. “No, that’s not what I want. I love you, Xavier. I’m hoping that in time Olivia, Connor, and Charles will forgive me. Knowing my daughter hates me is killing me,” she says.

“She doesn’t hate you Evelyn. She is angry, and she has every right to be. I promise you that I’ll do better with Olivia. I’m hoping after we talk to her about being a wolf she will understand that you never meant to hurt Charles or her. It may take time, but I have faith that the goddess will get us through this, Evelyn.”

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

[1,505 words]

Connor POV

Cosmo is making me crazy. It’s killing me for Rebecca to not be lying next to me, but we have to honor her wishes. She is at least talking to me now. I have never seen her so angry as she was after Oli told her what had happened between our parents. How she was taken away from the only home she has ever known. How she was forced to leave our father. Rebecca lost her father in a rogue attack, so she feels what Xavier and my mother are doing is wrong.

I’m not exactly happy about the way things went down, but I understand the need for Oli to shift here in the pack. When I tried to make her understand, she moved out of my room. I was terrified she was going to reject me and break our bond. Thankfully, she assured me that would never happen, but her being away from me, even if it’s just down the hall, makes my chest ache.

“Go beg for mate’s forgiveness. You hurt our mate and sister,” Cosmo says. “Cosmo, I hate that Oli is hurt, but Xavier is the Alpha. Besides, after she shifts, she will be able to go see dad as much as she wants. I’ll make sure of it.” He whimpers because he knows as well as I do the minute she can, Oli will leave for good. I push the blankets off and slide on my pajama bottoms. Even if Rebecca tells me to go away, at least I’ll get to see her and take in her scent. Maybe that will help me sleep.

I quietly make my way down the long hall until I come to stand in front of the guest room that she has claimed. I knock lightly, not wanting to wake Oli. After a few seconds, when she doesn’t answer, I reach for the handle. Despite trying, I expect the door to be locked, so I’m shocked when it opens. I push the door open and my stomach drops when I find the room empty. I immediately try to link Rebecca, but I can’t reach her.

Panic washes over me. Where the hell could she be at this time? Why can’t I reach her? I rush back to my room and grab my phone from the nightstand. I dial Rebecca’s phone and my shoulders sag when she picks

up on the second ring. “Rebecca, where are you?” There is silence and I pull the phone back to check the call hasn’t dropped, but her name is still lighting up the screen. “Rebecca, please answer me.”

“Connor, I’m at Mercy hospital with Oli,” she says. My blood practically freezes in my veins. “What happened?”

Is Oli alright? Why would you take her to the human hospital,” I ask my tone harsher than I mean it to be. “Oli isn’t the one in the hospital, Connor. A nurse tailed Oli because your father was brought here after he didn’t show up for work for a couple of days. He isn’t good, Connor,” she says.

I feel my knees start to buckle as I absorb her words. My knees hit the floor. My father, the man that raised me. That loved me all my life isn’t good. I know he said he understood my need to live in the pack with Rebecca, but I abandoned him just like mom did. “Connor, babe, talk to me” she says. I take a deep breath before I finally answer her. “I’m on my way, Becca.” “Please be careful, Connor” she says.

I quickly throw on jeans and a t–shirt before heading out of my room. I debate whether I should wake my mother, but in the end i know the guards will tell Xavier the minute I pass through the gates. I move to their

door and knock twice. A few seconds later Xavier throws the door open. “Connor, what’s wrong,” he asks. “I need to talk to my mother.”

“What’s wrong, Connor,” my mother asks as she comes to stand next to him. “Oli and Rebecca are at Mercy hospital.” “What” Xavier growls. “A nurse called Oli. Dad was taken to the hospital and he isn’t good. I’m just letting you know I’m going because I knew the guards would alert you. I’ll make sure to keep the girls safe.”

I turn to leave and my mother’s words stop me in my tracks “Connor, wait, I’m coming with you” she says. No, you’re not. Dad isn’t your concern anymore, besides Oli won’t want you there. Hell she probably won’t want me there. Xavier growls, but I’m right. My mother sobs, but I can’t bring myself to turn back to comfort her. We all made our choices. I make my way out of the pack house and down to my car.

I don’t even remember the drive to the hospital. When it comes into view, I quickly park and make my way inside. I take the elevator to the third floor and follow the signs to the room Becca gave me. When I reach the door, my heart breaks. It’s open enough for me to see Oli’s head resting on my father’s chest. “Please daddy, don’t leave me. I promise if you wake up I won’t leave you again. I don’t care if we have to move across the country. I can do school online. Please dad just wake up,” she sobs.

I slowly push the door open and step inside. I take a few steps before Oli lifts her head to see who just walked into the room. As soon as her eyes meet mine, she stands to her full height. Besides her tear–stained cheeks, her expression is completely unreadable

as she moves around the bed toward me. She stops a few feet from me. “Get the f**k out. You are not welcome here,” she says with all the venom she can muster.

“Oli, Becca says and Oli whirls on her. “How dare you tell him anything about my father after everything he and my mother have done to him? Both of you need to leave. I don’t need either of you here,” she says. I can feel Becca’s pain and sadness through our bond. Anger at my pain has me taking a step toward my sister.

“He is my father too. I had every right to know what was happening. Becca is my mate. Don’t you dare talk to her like that again, no matter how angry you are at me.”

“Connor, don’t,” she says as tears stream down her cheeks. “He is your father now. Now that he might die, you can bother to show up for him. You stopped being his son the minute you decided that Xavier was more important than him. I don’t want you here. Dad left me in charge because you abandoned him. So you can leave, or I’ll have you thrown out.” “You are going to lose them both,” Cosmo whispers, his agony mixing with my own.

I look past Oli at my father, who looks so frail. A man that has always been so strong. She’s right, I abandoned him. I was so worried about being accepted by the pack and Xavier. “Fine, I’ll leave Oli, but can I at least talk to him for a minute?” She looks back at him before she turns back and nods to me. She moves to the farthest corner of the room like she can’t stand to be this close to me. My sister hates me and at this moment I don’t blame her. I hate me too.

I move to the chair next to my father’s bed. I take his hand in mine. “Dad, I’m so sorry. I know you told me that you weren’t angry with me for wanting to live with the pack or be with my mate but I abandoned you. I abandoned you because I was selfish. I thought you would be there when everything was settled. I thought we had time and I could show you how important you were to me.”

“I know it doesn’t mean much now after everything that’s happened, but I love you. You are the best dad any kid could have asked for. I really am sorry and I hope you wake up so I can make it up to you. Please wake up dad. I really want to introduce you to Becca. She really loves me and Oli. We all need you to wake up. I swear things will be different if you just wake up dad.”

My mother saying my father’s name has me out of my chair. Oli is already moving toward her but I step in front of her. “Get out mom. I told you before I left you weren’t coming here.” “You have no right to stop me from seeing him, Connor. No matter what’s happened, I still care about your father” she says. “No, you don’t. Get the f**k out. You are nothing to him now. You are nothing to me. I hate you, and I’ll never forgive you” Oli screams.

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[1,977 words]

Olivia POV

I feel like I can't breathe. One minute I'm yelling at my brother and mother, then the next the monitor starts to scream. The room is flooded with people, and I'm shoved out of the way. I watch as a man in a long white coat starts to push on my father's chest. As much as I want to deny what's happening, I know what CPR is and if it's happening to my father, it's not good. I stand there watching as they try to save his life.

"Daddy, please don't leave me," I manage to cry out before a nurse pushes me out of the room. As soon as I'm in the hallway, I crumple to the floor. This can't be happening. He wouldn't leave me. Strong familiar arms scoop me up. I want to pull away from him, but I don't have the strength.

Besides, at this moment, I need him. When he starts to rock me, I completely lose control of my emotions. I feel like a beach that is being pummeled by waves as emotion after emotion rolls through me. Anger, sadness, and regret are the strongest. When the door opens to the room, I manage to find the strength to slide out of Connor's lap. I turn to face the doctor that I just watched minutes earlier, trying to save my father's life. His expression lets me know everything even before he speaks the words. "We did everything we could, but we were unable to save him," he says directly to me.

Before I can stop myself, I scream "no" and rush through the door. The nurses are flitting around the room clearing away the wires and tubes, but what I notice the most is how still my father is. No movement, not even the rise and fall of his chest. He is truly gone. He left me. One of the nurses look up at me with sympathy in her eyes. I don't want or need her sympathy right now. All I want is my dad to wake up. To tell me he won't leave me. To tell me, all of this has been a bad dream.

"Miss, why don't you let us clean him up, and then you can sit with him," the nurse says. "No, I want to be here." She nods and goes back to cleaning up. My feet move of their own volition and without a second thought I lay my head on my father's chest. His skin is still warm, but the silence is deafening proof he is gone. I start to sob as I wrap my arms tightly around him.

"I'm so sorry dad. I never should have left with them. I should have stayed with you. This is all my fault." "It's not your fault, Olivia. It's mine. I'm the reason all of this has happened, and I'm so sorry. I know you don't believe me, but I love your father," she says. "No, you're right, I don't believe a word you say. Now get out. You don't deserve to be here. You're right about this being your fault, and I'll never forgive you," I say, never moving from where I'm lying across my father's chest.

“Olivia, you’re going to need help. I can make the arrangements,” she starts to say. I immediately stand to my full height and move until I’m standing in her face. “Get the f**k out. I don’t want anything from you. My father is dead because of you. I hate you. Now leave and don’t let me ever hear you say you love my father again, you selfish b**ch.” She looks as if I just slapped her, but I couldn’t care in the least.

She bursts into tears and rushes out the door. I take the seat next to my father’s bed and take his hand in mine. I’m not sure how much time passes when the doctor from earlier steps into the room. “Olivia, I can’t imagine how hard this is, but we need to start the process of moving your father and making arrangements,” he says. I turn to look at him and nod.

Once I’m alone again, I stand and press a kiss on my father’s forehead. “I love you daddy.” I start across the room and when I reach the door I turn back to look at him one last time. I’m truly alone. “You’ll never be alone,

Oli a disembodied soft female voice says. I look around even though I know there is no one here with me, Great, on top of losing my father, I’m losing my mind. A soft giggle has me shaking my head,

When I step into the hallway, I’m glad to see only Rebecca. I’m still angry at her, but I couldn’t exactly expect her to keep something like this from Connor. When she notices me, she is on her feet. She stops right in front of me and I know she is holding herself back from wrapping me in her arms. I reach out to pull her into a hug, and she sags in my arms. “I’m so sorry, Oli. He called me when he realized I wasn’t in my room and I didn’t want to lie to him. As angry as I am, I knew he deserved to say goodbye too,” she says as she sobs.

“It’s alright Rebecca. I’m not angry anymore. I know how much you love my brother. As angry as I am at him he was our dad.” Her arms around me tighten. After a few minutes, we make our way to the nurses’ station. Anger threatens to choke me when I see Xavier and my mother speaking to the nurse. “Why are you still here? Leave, you aren’t welcome. You are the reason he is dead” I practically scream at both of them.

“Enough Olivia. You are not the only one that is hurting. Besides, you have no money to pay for your father’s arrangements,” he says. “Xavier, please” my mother says. “No, Evelyn. She doesn’t get to act like she is the only one that is hurting. You have all lost someone important to you,” he says. That’s when I lose it.

“Really, he was so important to her that she f**ked you. She left him. She is the reason he died. As for you, I’m sure you’re glad he is dead. I don’t want your money. I have money saved, and I’ll use every last dime to pay for my father before I let your dirty money pay for a damn thing.”

My mother gasps and Xavier starts to move toward me. Rebecca steps in front of me and I see hurt flash in Xavier’s eyes. “Leave Uncle. I will help Oli with whatever she

needs, but she is right. You and your wife shouldn't be here." Before Xavier can open his mouth, my mother does. "Take me home, Xavier." He looks at her and I swear her normally blue eyes are black.

He nods and pulls her to his side. As they pass me, I refuse to look at her. Two hours later all the arrangements are made and Rebecca is leading me out of the hospital. She leads me over to a car and I slide into the back seat. I refuse to look at Connor. When we finally reach the place that is even more of a prison now, I head straight to my room and lock the door. I strip as I make my way into the bathroom.

I make the water as hot as I possibly can before I step under the spray. Sliding down the shower wall, I curl into a ball and let the tears fall. This is the last time I will let myself fall apart. When the water runs cold, I turn it off. I dry and dress quickly. Sliding under the blanket sleep immediately takes me under. Visions of my father plague my dreams.

The sound of someone pounding on my door wakes me from sleep. I refuse to answer it. I don't want to see any of them. "Oli, it's me Rebecca." I roll out of bed and move to open the door. When it swings open, she has a tray covered with different breakfast foods. "I brought you breakfast. You need to make sure you eat," she says. "I'm not hungry, Becca. I just want to be left alone." "I know Oli, but I'm not going to let you just cut yourself off from me. Besides, Xavier wants us in his office in an hour" she says.

"Xavier can go f**k himself. I don't want to see him or Evelyn." "I know your angry Oli and you have every right to be, but what they have to say is important. Honestly, they should have told you the day you arrived. Hell, you should have known all your life," she says. "I'm not interested in anything either of them have to say." "Oli, this isn't about them, it's about you. You need to know exactly what you are and why you were brought here," she says.

I go to open my mouth, but she cuts me off. "I'm not permitted to tell you, Oli. You're going to have to suffer through the meeting with Xavier and your mother," she says. "Evelyn isn't my mother. I'm an orphan." She simply nods. I force myself to eat toast before I take a shower and get dressed. Rebecca leads me through the huge mansion and I notice people meandering about. Who the hell are all these people?

We reach a large wooden door. She knocks twice before a deep voice calls out for us to enter. She pushes the door open and I follow her inside. Connor is seated on a couch that rests in front of a large bay window. I turn to see Evelyn and Xavier sitting behind a large wooden desk. I want to turn and leave, but Rebecca threads her arm through mine, keeping me in place. "Have a seat, Olivia" Xavier says. "I'd rather not. Just get on with whatever bullsh*t you need to tell me."

His fists tighten where they rest on his desk. "Sit down, Olivia, now," he says. I feel like I'm not in control of my body as I move and take the seat. "Xavier, this is not the way,"

my mother says. “Unfortunately, Evelyn, it’s the only way. She won’t listen otherwise. We all need to get past this,” he says. “Past what, you killing my father?”

“Olivia, I’m very sorry that Charles died, but it’s no one’s fault. Now, we need to discuss the reason it is so important you stay on the pack grounds.” I refuse to acknowledge what he just said, so he keeps going. “I know this place seems strange to you, but this is pretty normal for a wolf pack,” he says. I look at him for a moment before I finally throw my head back and laugh.

When I finally get myself under control, I look at my mother. “Way to go Evelyn. You had a perfectly sane man and traded him in for this delusional pr*ck.” Before I realize what’s happening, Xavier is out of his seat and his eyes flash black. My eyes can’t believe what they’re seeing. Fur is starting to cover every bare piece of skin as Xavier falls on all fours. Connor pushes me behind him and my mother rushes around the desk to cover Xavier with her body. “Atlas, please get control of yourself. She is hurting,” she says.

“She is disrespectful. She is hurting you, mate,” a voice that sounds nothing like Xavier’s comes from him. “No, she is hurting. She lost her father. Give Xavier back control. If you hurt my pup, I will never forgive you” she says, and Xavier whimpers. What the f**k is happening right now? Am I still asleep and having a nightmare?

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[1,795 words]

Olivia POV

“I know this is all hard to believe Oll, but it’s true. This place is a werewolf pack. We are all wolves,” Becca says. “Oh my God, I was right. This is like some kind of cult. Did you all drink the crazy juice? You are all delusional. I’m not sure what kind of trick that was, but werewolves are not real. I have to get out of here.”

“Oli, I know how hard this is to believe,” Evelyn starts to say, but I stand effectively cutting her off. I refuse to acknowledge her as my mother. I will bury the only parent I have in two days. I meant what I said about never forgiving her.

“You might all want to have your heads examined because werewolves aren’t real. Now, I have actual real things to deal with, like burying my father. I’ve lost the only real parent I had left and you people want to talk about pretend. I may have no choice but to stay here for five more months, but besides Rebecca, I’m done talking to any of you. The minute I can leave, I’m gone.”

I turn and push the door open despite Xavier practically growling for me to get back into the office. Instead of heading up to my room, I run down the stairs and out of the mansion. I haven't run since I came here, but today I don't stop running until my lungs burn. I drop to the ground and let the tears fall.

I wrap my arms around my knees and bury my face effectively shutting out the world around me. How could my life change so much in such a short time. Two months ago, I really believed we had the perfect family. That I had the perfect life.

Now I'm alone. My dad is gone, and I can't even look at my mother without being consumed with anger. The sound of wood snapping has me picking up my head to look around. I scramble to my feet as more branches break. I'm just about to take off in the opposite direction when a wolf five times bigger than a normal wolf steps through the trees. My heart feels like it's going to pound out of my chest as I start to slowly back up.

The chocolate brown wolf takes another few steps toward me. I know I'll never out run it, but I refuse to stand here and be eaten by a f**king creature that is make-believe. Maybe I really am still dreaming. It c**ks its head as it trying to figure me out. I take another step back until I hear a low growl from behind me. I whirl around to find an even bigger black wolf. I can't stop the scream that tears from my lungs. "Oli, it's alright," Becca says from behind me. Now I definitely know I'm dreaming.

Becca is standing naked as the day she was born, reaching out towards me like she is approaching a scared animal. "Babe, she isn't used to the nudity yet," Connor says from behind me. I look back, and my brother is standing where the black wolf was just seconds ago. He is wearing only a pair of basketball shorts as he tosses clothes to Becca. I slam my eyes closed. "Alright, Oli, it's time to wake up. All the bad sh*t thats been happening is making you dream this crazy sh*t. Wake up" I say.

Becca's giggle lets me know that when I open my eyes that she and my brother are still going to be there. "This isn't a dream, Oli. We are wolves," my brother says. I open my eyes and glare at Connor. "Why are you doing this to me? Why are you going to all this trouble to make me believe something that can't be true?"

Haven't I been through enough, Connor? What did I ever do to you to deserve this?" He takes a step toward me, but I take a step back.

"Oli, I promise you that no one is trying to trick you. This isn't a lie. I have no reason to try to hurt you, Oli. You are my best friend, Becca says. "Becca, I feel like I'm losing my mind. I've lost my dad, and now I'm losing touch with what's real. Werewolves aren't real." "Oli, can you try to trust me for a minute? I'll show you that you're not crazy. My wolf's name is Maya. She really wants to properly meet you. You don't have to be scared she won't hurt you, Oli," Becca says.

Am I really entertaining this? Hell, even if it's a dream, I trust Becca. "Fine, but I still think this is a dream." She starts to strip, but before I turn to give her privacy she stops

me. "It's alright, Oli. Wolves walk around naked all the time," she says. "I'm not a wolf, Becca." Before I can turn away, she is completely naked one second, and the next, the same chocolate brown wolf is standing in her place. I stumble back and Connor steadies me. I quickly step out of his hold. I see sadness flash in his eyes before he takes a step toward the wolf.

"Connor" I say. I may be angry at him, but I don't want to see him hurt or worse dead. He gives me a soft smile. "Maya won't hurt me, Oli. She is my mate as much as Becca is." The wolf practically purrs before it lays at my brother's feet. He bends pressing a kiss on the wolf's forehead. "Oli, this is Maya. Maya, this is my sister, Oli" he says. I'm so confused I don't even correct him for calling me Oli. "I don't understand. How can Becca be a wolf?"

"We are all wolves, Oli," he says. His words have me fighting to breathe. Is he saying that I'm a wolf? I'm not a wolf. I'm just a girl that, up until a few months ago, had the best life. I can't pull enough air into my lungs. Black dots dance in front of my eyes as my vision narrows. "Oli, it's alright. Deep slow breaths" Becca says, but I can't. I can feel her hand rubbing circles on my back. The sound of what can only be described as a stampede is the last thing I hear before the darkness takes me under.

Connor POV

I'm just lifting Oli into my arms when my mother's wolf, Summer, and Xavier's wolf, Atlas, reach us. They both shift and my mother rushes toward me. "Is she alright? What happened" she asks, her voice laced with concern. "We showed her our wolves and told her that she is one too." "What the hell were you thinking, Connor? She is barely hanging on to her emotions. Why would you show her that," she asks.

I growl as I step past her. I turn before I make my way to the pack hospital. "I refuse to keep things from her any longer. Maybe had you sat down before she caught you kissing Xavier and explained everything that happened, she wouldn't hate you right now. She wouldn't hate me. Maybe if you let her visit dad none of this would be happening. You made your choices, mom, and now I'm making mine. I love you, but I refuse to lose my sister because of you."

I turn making my way toward the path that leads to the pack hospital. Becca catches up and we walk in silence. When we step inside, a younger nurse makes her way toward me. "Can I help you," she asks, stepping closer to me and eyeing me like a piece of meat. Before I can roll my eyes, a low growl comes from behind me. "Morgan, I suggest if you want to keep your eyes in your head you'll keep them off my mate," Becca says.

"My apologies" she says, taking a step back. "My sister passed out. She needs to be checked out. I'm sure she is fine, but I would rather be safe." "Of course, follow me," she says. Becca and I follow her. When we reach the room, I lay Oli down and brush the hair away from her face. "I love you, Oli. I know that I've hurt you, but I'm going to spend

the rest of my life making sure you know how important you are to me, even if you can never forgive me.”

Becca wraps her arm around my middle and I pull her to me before I bury my nose in her hair. “She loves you too, Connor. She is angry and hurt, but she loves you,” Becca says. The door opening halts our conversation and all I can do is pray that Becca is right. I’m shocked when a man that is very much human, steps into the room. “Ace, when did you get back,” Becca asks. I can’t stop the growl that escapes me.

Becca slaps my chest before she turns back to the man I assume is the doctor. “A few days ago. I see you found your mate, congratulations” he says. “Ace, this is my mate, Connor Connor, this is Ace, one of my best friends.” I reach out my hand and he takes it. “Are you human?” “Jeepers, Connor, what the hell,” Becca says. What I’m just curious as to why a human is in a wolf pack after all your uncles warnings about keeping us secret?”

“It’s alright Becca. It’s a legitimate question. The short answer is that my mother was pregnant with me from a failed relationship when my father met her. She was his mate and he accepted her and me instantly. I am his son in every way except biologically. Even his wolf thinks of me as his pup. He brought her here and I grew up among the wolves. When I decided to become a doctor, I knew that when I was done with schooling I would come back to work here to the pack hospital. This is my home. I want my children to grow up here,” he says.

“Now if you’re done being nosey, maybe let Ace check on Oli” Becca says. “Sorry, we grew up thinking we were humans. Oli passed out after we told her about wolves. After I told her she is a wolf. We just lost our father. I think it was a bit much at once.” “You think. She had no idea, and you told her all that at once. Probably not the smartest plan. I’m sure she is fine, but we will check her over to be sure,” he says. I just pray when Oli

wakes up she isn’t ready to run away from all of us after all the secrets we’ve kept.

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