

Chapter Three | A Month After

---POV Julie---

To say I was badgered day and night after my hangover nally subsided was an understatement. I was covered in bruises and hickies and I had no idea who they came from. They didn't hurt or anything. They felt like...I don't know...like I belonged to someone who...who cared about me? They felt like false hope. I just know I didn't want the marks to disappear. Without them, I almost felt naked. I know...weird right? What's worse, I felt exhausted every day shortly after and a month later I was gaining weight!

I'm not a toothpick by any means, but I've always prided myself on keeping in shape and my body toned. I train for three hours every day. I am captain of our martial arts club on campus and I'm gaining weight?! I stared at myself in the mirror and the bloating was too obvious to ignore. I groaned irritably and chocked it up to my period. "I need to get going anyway. Nia won't wait forever." I whispered to no one in particular. I let the fabric of my tank top, tightly clutched in my hands ow over my tummy. The best I could do for now was hide the extra uff and run out to meet Nia.

"What were you doing in the bathroom for so long? You okay?" She asked.

"Why wouldn't I be? I guess I'm just nervous about the road trip." I lied awlessly.

"How do you think I feel? I have to be the Luna in six months. Let's just say, I'm not as ecstatic about this as I thought I'd be." For once in our life, she really looked nervous. The condence she normally shows is long gone, and the short walk to her car seemed to take twice as long as I thought it should. I decided to stay with her the rst half of the summer and assist with her packing. The entire rst month of summer. Gone. One would ask, does she really have that much stuff. Trust me. She does.

"R-right. I wasn't thinking." I mumbled absentmindedly. She furrowed her brow and looked me over as if she'd nd the answers to her questions by just looking at me.

"Either way, let's get going before my parents try to keep me here another summer." She threw out hurriedly before pulling the both of us to the truck. I hopped into the passenger seat, and she slipped into the driver's side. The trailer was hitched onto her Ford Ranger and the two of us were off.

The conversation in the truck was seamless but the stress was building the closer we got to the pack boarders. I wanted to run out of the car and see how much of my breakfast would return to me, but I couldn't let the stress get to me. It would just make Nia worry. I'm supposed to be a supportive friend. I'll be ne. This is ne. His pack has tons of humans living there. So, why do I feel so worried? Why does my body feel like it'd rather throw up than anything else. Why am I feeling so horrible?

After another three hours of relentless twists and turns we nally made it to a small town in the middle of the woods. You guessed it. The home of my bestie's mate: Red Moon Pack. "Finally, we made it!" Nia shouted but at this point, my ears were ringing, and it almost felt like the same day I came back from that awful party. The party that has been...repressed from my memories.

"Hmm." I grunted and she glanced over to me as we pulled up to the main house in town. I'm assuming this is where Kevin and his family live.

"Julie...are you okay? You look...worse." She stopped the car and raced around to my side, lurching the door open. Hearing my full name from her didn't make me feel any better. I leaned over resting my clammy hands on either side of my head when her voice started to mue along with another's. "Jules!"

Noise.... So much...noise. "Jules!"

Beeping. Where am I? Why do I feel so...? I gasped awake and looked around the room in a panic. The beeping increased and the ringing in my ears started again. What's happening?! I was in Nia's car and now.... I let my eyes wander as I got my bearings. "Easy now Miss.Bruen." I winced and shook my head. "Do you know where you are?" The voice asked and I shook my head again.

"N-No." I whispered, trying my voice. It's so raspy.

"Here drink this." Now, that voice I know.

"Nia?" I whispered again. "Where are we?"

"Well, that answers that question doc. She doesn't know where we are." Nia sighed in relief as a breathless chuckle lled the air. "We are at the hospital in Red Moon. Do you remember you came with me to help me get my stuff to Kevin's pack?" She asked again.

"Yes, but when did I get out of the car?" I claried.

"Three days ago." Another voice joined the party, and it sounded like they were sprinting. "How ya doing, Jules?" Ah, Kevin.

I turned and rubbed my hand over my face. "Fine, but three days is an awfully long time to sleep. I guess packing Nia's things really did a number on me." Maybe it's because of my period. Shoot! I'm probably going to need a change of bedding in here. I sighed irritably but what I didn't miss was the dead silence in the room. I peeked through my ngers and a worried Nia looked back at me. "What?" I asked with a smirk. Trying to hide the fact that I desperately need to check myself.

"That's not the reason." She said slowly and with a purpose.

I let my hand fall and the doctor started doing my blood pressure. Nia hesitated, reading my face so I nodded to her. Whatever she had to say seemed like it was really important. She raced through some folders on the mobile table, grabbing a small post card looking paper off the bottom. "Nia...you're scaring me. Do I have some sort of crazy disease or something?" I added as a second attempt to lighten the room.

She handed me the paper and I could see her hands shaking when the doctor released my arm from the constricting band. I reached out for the document. Once the smooth texture grazed my ngertips, I knew it was a photo. Of what I wonder. I looked down and dropped the black and white image on my chest. "Now before you freak out--"

"What do you mean before I freak out?! What is this?!" I shouted lurching myself higher on the bed and completely ignoring the nausea building in my body.

"So, she didn't know." Kevin said with concern.

"Didn't know what, Kevin? That I was pregnant when I don't even remember who I had s*x with?! Yes! I didn't know!" I screamed at him. I know it's not his fault but I'm livid. The doctor and nurse growled at me, and I shot a glare their way. "Screw your bullshit hierarchy! I'm about to have some unknown person's baby! I really don't want to hear it right now!" I shot back, completely unphased. I guess I really wasn't nervous about being in a pack environment. I cannot believe I mistook pregnancy for nerves.

Kevin raised his hand as they stepped towards me. "She's like a sister to me. She's allowed." He called and the room immediately calmed down, but I didn't.

"I apologize this is a shock to you, but luckily you came with Nia because there is one more thing." Kevin added.

"What? What else could I possibly need to know??" I hissed.

"They are twins, and due to their size, they are most likely wolves." I froze as those words left his mouth. Wolves. They are wolves?

That means...it was the one-night stand. The timing is right, and I don't remember having s*x with anyone else. It's not like people are lining up to be with me. I closed my eyes tight, trying my best to remember the one night I felt like someone other than Nia wanted me. The night that I knew was the best night of my life, but I don't live in fairytales, I live in reality. Because of that fact, the one time I wanted to remember something, I couldn't. Nothing came to mind. Everything was blurred and blank like usual. "Maybe... maybe he will nd you. I mean you did come home with his clothes on." Nia suggested. I know she was trying to make everything better, but I just couldn't see the bright side right now.

I wrapped my arms around my body and the fear continued to ood my mind. All the fear I didn't think about that night. "Wha...what if...."

"Don't worry, we tested you for anything else. You are clean. We will do another test in six months, but for now, our concern is the babies." The doctor said, trying to soothe me.

That's not what I was concerned about but it's nice to know. I think I'm worried about if he does nd me. I'm sure he won't want a human. I'm sure he will burst the perfect bubble I put him in faster than I could tell him the news. Wait...the news...babies.... "The babies?!" I shouted.

"Yes, remember what the alpha said before? They are twins, Miss.Bruen."

Right. Twins. Two of them. I started to breathe heavily, and the beeping started to increase. "Doctor! She's going into shock."

"Alright! Everyone out! We need to sedate her. We will continue this conversation in the morning." He shouted and my best friend along with her mate, disappeared out of the door just in time for my eyes to grow heavy once more and the darkness of my dreams to consume me.

---POV Benson---

{Seven Years Later}

I stared out of the wall of glass as another chairman droned on about the economic state of werewolves on a global scale. Our company facilitates many of our fellow wolves, but we can only help out so much. There are other companies around the world that are also run by wolves, and they do well for themselves, but nothing comes close to us. Nothing comes close to the White Family and our kingdom's wealth. Even the vampire monarchy has come to a stalemate over the everlasting clash between our families.

Now, the heir of the vampire kingdom works for me along with my younger brother Kenneth. The three of us have been thick as thieves for years and, for now, I only see positives in our future. This guy however, I can tell all he wants to see. More money in his pockets. Upsetting the balance my father fought to provide to our people. "Thank you all for listening to our nancial forecast for this year. If you have any questions, please direct them to my secretary. We will respond promptly."

"Right...promptly. They will respond with a million more pages of convoluted numbers that are starting to look more and more like embezzlement the further we move towards your coronation." Ken huffed through our link, and I clicked my teeth.

"We will end the meeting here for today. Sales, I need another approach to our new wearable product. I expect the slides to be emailed to me in two weeks." I called and the meeting room cleared out faster than a startled ock of birds.

"Ha! Well, you know how to clear a room. I wish you had that same luck when we were back in college. The girls were relentless." Aaron Vladimir chimed in mockingly with his harsh Russian accent. The Vampire Prince himself.

"True, but you didn't even go to the same college as us." Ken smirked.

"I prefer the night life." He hummed back and the two jackals started laughing. I cannot believe it's already been seven years since I ended my college career. After the crazy party we threw before nals week, I felt like I haven't looked up to see the light of day ever since. Now, the world has passed me by.

Either way, I'm a billionaire with the world at my feet and hundreds of years to enjoy it. My father's only three hundred and twelve, and you'd think he was a spring chicken. In his eyes, I'm just a child that needs to be coddled. One day...one day that will no longer be the case.

"Hey! Did you see the news last night?!" Speaking of fathers. The slam of the conference room door shuttered the room as he stormed in shortly after his words.

I rubbed my eyes before xing my face and focusing on the man that has made his grand entrance with our family butler, Jason Ambrose, scurrying close behind with a stack of papers. "You know pops, maybe you should start helping out around the business again, so you don't go off doing anything too crazy." Ken said and we both shot daggers at him.

"No!" Dad and I answered, voices bellowing through the room siphoning any other thoughts that could possibly pop up in my brother's mind.

Pops grabbed the remote and hurried to connect his phone to the screen sharing application. Thanks to his inquisitive mind, he's very tech savvy. "Just watch." He huffed and a recording of the news began to play.

When the clip ended, my eyes shifted to jet black. "Mine." My spirit howled. It's unmistakable. That's the woman. The woman I was with the night before my business trip. The trail I had to leave behind because...because.... "Oh, just say it! You ignored the hunt because you were worried. Worried she didn't want you! You let her get away!" My spirit shouted.

"When was this taken?" I pressed through my spirit's unrelenting thrashing in my mind, forcing myself to ignore the truth he just threw at me.

"Last night." Pops called in triumph. The room stayed deady silent as I mulled over the events that were just shown to me. After seven years...I found her again. The little human that got away. My spirit was right. I should have never let her leave that morning. "You cannot tell me you don't see the resemblance, son."

"Ken...Aaron, it's time to start digging." I growled.

"We are well ahead of you, your highness." Jason rested the stack of papers in front of me and Ken nodded in our direction, calling our guys to nish the job. My dad was good at nding what he wanted, but I was better. I cannot let her slip away. Not again. Especially since, it looks like she wasn't the only one I left behind.

"So that's her." Aaron called leaning back in his chair. "The human that will change the tide." His chuckle wasn't of malice. I've known him long enough. It seemed like he's ocially interested.

"That's her." I conrmed. They both looked at me and I knew my face said it all. It put the pieces together that both Aaron and Ken have been trying to grasp for years. They knew I have been chipping away since that day. They saw how that one night of bliss almost destroyed the next king.

With that revelation, they didn't hesitate to agree with me. Aaron nodded once. "Hmmm...then I guess it's time to nd your princessa."