Chapter 2

Avery's POV One of the rogues scoffed without even looking at who was behind him. "Back off, lad. Go find your own girl—" "Wait. He's not..." another stammered. The rogues all turned their attention to the man behind them. I saw a figure, all in black, standing there. His height and broad shoulders emanated strength and power. He looked even stronger than Ryan, who was already a strong Alpha, but I couldn't see his face in the dark. "I said, leave her alone. Don't make me say it a third time," the man warned the rogues again. "Shit, let's go-," The rogues stumbled back, muttering curses, and then fled away. And then there was silence. Now I was alone with him. From here, I could sense that he was in heat as well. I felt drawn to him like a moth to flame. For one second, warning bells blared in my mind. Had I traded one pack of predators for an even more dangerous one? Then he started walking towards me. With every step, the intoxicating smell became heavier, luring me in as we drew closer to each other. "Mine," The stranger said while his arms slid around my waist, sending bolts of honeyed lightning down my spine. I swallowed hard. He was irresistible. My fingers scrabbled at his forearms, but the heat of him as he pulled me against him... Oh my goodness. My pulse still pounded, but now it pounded in time with his heartbeat. I found myself clinging to his shoulders instead of pushing him away. One of his hands stroked from my waist up my side and came to rest on the side of my neck. Then he tilted my face towards the moon, his mouth claiming mine in a searing thunderclap. What a kiss! I gasped, and parted my lips to let him take more of me. Static frizzed across my nerves as his mouth and tongue claimed mine. No one has ever kissed me like this! Time stuttered past in gasps of breath and heat. His lips and hands dragged wildfire across my skin, and lower. I squirmed as his hands parted my clothing, and then moaned as he sank his fingers between my legs where my core was wet and ready. Already we had leaped past anything I had ever done with Ryan. I found I didn't care. There was only this man. Only he mattered now. The moon above danced in my vision as I lost myself in the haze of pleasure and sensation. I couldn't get enough of him. Nothing had ever felt better. No one had ever touched me like this... I was liquid moonlight in his arms as he undressed me in the darkness. I unbuttoned his clothing, wanting his skin against mine. His mouth ran across my body like he was worshipping me. The sounds he made as he touched me everywhere was lavish praise. "Mine." He repeated in a growl, stroking my skin and listening to my pleasured cries as he moved behind me. His hands were all over me, and I felt him pushing at my entrance. I spread myself further for him, I needed him so badly. The mating heat had set me aflame. Then he was inside me. Taking me. Pleasure crescendoed within me, somewhere a wolf howled. We rested against each other after our first joining. He was strong and searingly hot as I leaned back on his chest and he slowly continued to move inside of me, our bodies locked together. He pressed soft kisses to the top of my head, and then we found our passion

again, mating again and again. When we finally separated, it was only so that I could mount him from the top this time. He kissed along my jaw as his hands grasped my hips and lifted me onto his lap while he entered me. I rocked my hips against him, feeling him deep inside of me. His nails scratched down my back as he made sounds of approval beneath me. I rode him fervently. He leaned up so his mouth claimed mine while his hands caressed every part of me, and he murmured sweet, prayerful praises into my skin. I felt treasured and beautiful under his admiration. Then he flipped me onto my back and plunged into me vigorously, claiming my lips with his. When his head sank to my neck again, there was a sudden stinging of pain, followed by more pleasure. I felt like I was going to explode with sensation as he thrust into me. We moved together in a final climax and exploded together, crying out in dual, synchronous orgasms. I didn't know who he was, but in the throes of heat, I didn't care. He was perfect. I was his. He was mine. We fit together perfectly. That was all that mattered. I woke in the dewy grass in pre-dawn darkness. My stranger lay behind me, cradling me in his strong arms. I couldn't see his face in the shadows, but I traced the contours of his jaw with my fingers, gently. Who are you? I wondered. Whoever he is, he's massively strong. I couldn't believe my first mating had been with a rogue in the forest. It was hard to feel regret when it had felt so good. "Thank you for protecting me." I whispered against his sleeping cheek, "And thank you for showing me pleasure." I slowly pulled myself away from him and dressed, wincing at sore muscles and other places that were tender after what we'd done. I blushed a bit at the memory. It had been lovely, but now it would be a secret treasure I kept for myself, forever. As dawn rose over the forest, I carefully left without waking him up. I returned home as quickly as possible. I could hear my family chatting loudly in the living room as I tried to slink silently down the hallway to my room. " The Alpha's heir is quite the catch, Zara," my father was saying with a pride he never showed for me. "Think of the prestige this will bring to our daughter!" my step-mom exalted. She had been the one who had called me a liar, accusing me of pretending to have a wolf and encouraging others to bully me. You would think my father as Gamma, the military coordinator for our pack, would have seen this as an affront to his family. Instead, he had loathed me for bringing that negative attention home. He blamed me for what he saw as the loss of our family's prestige. While they all seemed distracted by celebrating Zara's mating with Ryan, I snuck up the stairs to my room. Thankfully, no one seemed to have noticed that I'd been gone all night. I was a mess from spending the night making love on the forest floor, and I needed a shower badly. When I undressed, I gasped at the sight of a bite-mark on my neck. How could he mark me? If anyone saw this mark, I would be ruined. To be marked by a strange rogue from outside our pack without our Alpha's consent was considered treason. I needed to hide it. With a bang, the door to the bathroom flew open. "Didn't know you got home already, human." Zara stepped into the room with glee. I tried desperately to hide the mark on my neck with my hand, but she noticed the movement. "What are you hiding?" Zara strode across the room and pulled my arm down roughly. "A mating mark!" She laughed cruelly. "Dad! Mom!" Zara shouted to the living room downstairs. "Please Zara, no!" I pleaded. "The pathetic human got marked by someone, and she dared to hide it from us!"