

Wolfless, Fateful Encounters Chapter 2

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Rue

The drive home brought clarity with each mile I put between me and the hotel room. I was the Alpha's daughter, the future ruler of this pack, and the strongest warrior. Few werewolves could beat me in a fight, yet I'd allowed some unknown wolf to touch me. The evidence of my failure to protect myself was still staining my inner thighs and marking my skin all over like a brand. It wasn't like I wasn't attached to my virginity, nor did I feel it was special, but I had wanted to remember the experience, not be drugged and violated. All I knew was a massive hand on my arm and the necklace left in my palm.

I sprinted up the stairs of the pack house, heading for my bedroom on the fourth floor. I avoided all the pack members by using the servants' stairs. The staff no longer used this outdated maze, so the likelihood of being spotted was minimal. I couldn't let anyone see me, let alone know what happened. Shame burned my cheeks and held my lungs captive. *I must have done or said something wrong to make them do this to me. I should've fought harder, said no louder. This was my fault for being so weak. *

Once in my room, I slowly stripped off the man's shirt to get through the soreness and pain. The necklace clattered to the ground in front of me. I'd forgotten its existence until this moment and realized I'd stolen the item from the man who violated me. I bent down to pick it up and studied the symbols on it. I wasn't sure why it had been in my hand or why I took it with me, but something about it seemed necessary. The urge to chuck it out the window was so strong that I growled in frustration. I couldn't get rid of it yet. I gently set it on my vanity to be safe and sound.

I shuffled into my shared bathroom, which connected to Cassie's room. Staring into her room brought up all of my anger, shame, embarrassment, and overwhelming hurt. *How could my family do this to me? Why plot out the whole thing? What was her end game? Why would my best friend betray me like this? *

I quickly slammed her door and locked it before turning on the shower. I slowly stepped into the shower letting the scalding hot water burn away any trace of the rape. I added my body wash to a loofa and scrubbed every cell in my body. I sobbed, letting the tears flow freely to take the pain, humiliation, and grief with them. My internal cries for my wolf Etty went unanswered, only confirming what I had known in the elevator when my chest snapped painfully. My wolf was gone. I didn't know how, but she was. What would I do without her? Our wolves were a part of us as we are of them. The legend says the Moon Goddess broke our soul into two and brought both bodies into one so we would always have our family. Our pack. I'd never felt so alone in my entire existence.

Once I was sure I had scrubbed off the top layer of my skin and removed all traces of my broken virginity from between my legs, I exited the shower, wrapping a plush towel around my raw and tender skin. I could still feel the numerous bite marks bruising my neck and body. I needed a plan to cover them up. I would do everything in my power to hide my shame from my father. He had too much to worry about already.

I entered my bedroom again to find my father, stepmother, and Cassie standing in my room. My stepmother held up the man's shirt while Cassie showed Father something on her phone. I didn't need to be a genius to figure out it was the staged video of me leaving the hotel room. I could barely hear Jessica's voice, but it was enough to confirm my suspicions. I froze when my father's eyes cut to me, then my neck. His face was cold and heartless and showed the ruthless Alpha he was. Even after my mother's death, my father has never looked at me this way. I was terrified. My hand instantly covered the bite marks, failing to hide my shame.

"See, Daddy! I told you she keeps running off to sleep with random men! When Jessica told me, I couldn't believe my own sister would defile our family name this way. What respectable man will want her now?"

"This is why you skipped out and humiliated me at the luncheon?" my stepmother screeched. "Darling, I should have said something the first time I saw her getting a little handsy with a man, but Rue had assured me it was purely a training session."

I gritted my teeth. "It had been. You are misconstruing things. I didn't do anything wrong."

"So you didn't get to the Westford Hotel?" My father's voice dripped with disappointment and anger.

I grimaced under his cold scrutiny, "It's not what it looks like. I did go there, but I thought--"

"You thought you wouldn't get caught just like every time before that right slut? Jessie told me this wasn't the first time she had to cover for you." My stepmother screamed.

"Poor Jessica had to cover for you so many times, and it made her sick," Cassie whined. "So sick she had to tell someone. Luckily, it was me and not the press!"

"Enough!" My father's voice held the alpha command, silencing us all. He stepped toward me, placing a hand on my chin to get a better look at the marks on my neck. He shoved my head side to side to see every inch of my neck. His hand stopped, and he looked at me.

"Daddy?" I whimpered, trying to reach the man I loved so much. A father was supposed to protect his daughter. *Where was he when I needed him? Where had he been for years since my mother's death? *I'd endured so much for so long all alone. Yet when I

looked into his eyes, I saw it. The disappointment swirling around his iris made my throat clog with emotions.

He didn't believe I was innocent. He thought the false accusations my stepmother, Cassie, and Jessica were spewing. No matter what I say to explain myself, he would believe I chose to go there. My father would accuse me of defiling the family name when I was the one defiled. How could he choose their words over mine? I remembered the video Cassie took that morning and knew that was her evidence. I wanted to scream.

He sighed, then commanded, "Rue, you are no longer my daughter."

"No!" I breathed, my heart breaking in two.

"You have been banished from the Blood Red pack." He continued. "I will send someone to assist you in packing all your things."

"No! Please don't do this!" I wailed, reaching for my father, but he swatted my hand away. "Please, let me explain!"

"You will have until midnight to be off my land, or you will face the consequences." Father turned and left. Cassie cackled, chanting slut under her breath. I fell to the floor, trying to gasp for air as my world burned down around me.

Six years later...

My fingers shook as I read through the letter for the third time. The sounds of L.A. filtered through my open apartment window. The noise was almost loud enough to drown out the memories from six years ago. That fateful night completely changed the course of my life. The letter was an invitation to lead a training camp back east focused on fending off rogue attacks. I accepted it weeks ago because I felt obligated to help. My mother's death at the hands of Rogers still weighed heavily on my mind, so I needed to help where I could. The attacks were increasing in brutality and frequency. I am a champion MMA fighter now. Even without a wolf or scent, I still possess the skills and knowledge to train the next generation.

The flashes of my expulsion from my pack still felt like a vise grip on my chest, and I worried about moving back east. It had been six years since I lost my wolf, my scent, and the werewolf coloring in my eyes, but I was still stronger than ever. I've spent the last six years living in the human world and doing everything I could to survive my banishment. I sold the necklace to have some money to start on and moved as far away from my previous life as I could. I only contacted my father once after I'd left to give him my happy news.

A small hand gripped mine, pulling me out of my nightmarish thoughts. Icy blue eyes met mine as my boy calmly asked, "Mom, Are we really leaving here? I want to say bye to my friends."