

## Chapter 2

Sierra

I woke up in a cold sweat heaving for air. The nightmares continued. Last night was no different from the night before and the one before that. My family and my pack's death weigh heavily on my soul these days. Although it had been 6 years since we were attacked, it still felt as though it had just happened. Maybe because I never had closure, maybe because I was a young 12-year-old pup at the time, maybe because my current life was a constant reminder of how good my old life was, maybe because I was a crusty b\*\*\*h who couldn't let things go very easily. Maybe all of the above.

"Lets go look for mate today." My wolf Sierra said, just like she had done every day since we turned 16.

"You know we cant. I don't know why you keep asking" I said as I reluctantly got out of bed.

"If we left this s\*\*t hole we could." She said with an eye-roll.

"I'm a slave, if I try to leave they'll kill us and you know it. Plus, we can't shift, we have \$4 in change to our name and it's going to be winter soon." I rolled my eyes back at her.

A slave. That's all I was. No longer an Alpha's daughter, but a servant who got pushed around every day. I had no friends, no family. I currently reside in Silver Moon Pack. When my pack was burned to the ground I ran for miles and miles and miles. I'm not exactly sure how far from home I really was but it didn't matter, my home was gone now. The Alpha of the Silver Moon pack, Carl, had found me on the forest oor, naked, dehydrated, and starving. He saved my life, quite literally. I was put in the hospital for a few weeks while I recovered. No one believed me when I said that I had shifted at such a young age, nor have I been able to shift since, so I became a laughing stock very quickly. A werewolf who couldn't shift, gures. No one believed I could speak with my wolf, Sierra, either, but she had come to me after my pack was attacked. After I left the hospital, I was put into the pack orphanage where I stayed until I aged out of it at 16. Thankfully, I was able to graduate high school before becoming a servant in the pack house. Which because I wasn't getting paid and had unt living conditions and was constantly referred to as a "slave girl", not to mention, I was told if I ran away, I would be killed, I was a slave. I was also never made a member of the pack. I still don't know if that is a good or bad thing.

I rubbed my eyes and looked at the clock in the laundry room. 6:05am. s\*\*t. I was running late already. I needed to get these nightmares under control. I needed to visit nature again. My mother always said nature had healing properties. It had been far too long since I had been permitted to leave the pack house. I was overdue for some fresh air. Maybe I could convince the Luna to let me outside to go rake up the leaves. That would give me some fresh air while also appealing to the f\*\*\*\*g queen \*eye-roll". Luna Tammy wasn't actually a queen; she just acted spoiled like one. She seemed to go out of her way to make my life hell.

I quickly got off my makeshift mattress, essentially a pile of old towels and rags that were being thrown out that I sewed together, and dusted myself off. My "room" was in the corner of the laundry room. Luna Tammy said it only made sense since I would be doing everyone's laundry, and no one wanted to see the help anyway. The packhouse held the Alpha, Beta, and Gammmas families, and on rare occasions a guest or two. There were 9 people, 10 including me. And I did everything. Cooking, cleaning, laundry, you name it. They had additional help but Alpha Carl's son, Theo, got a bit too handsy with some of the help and they quit. Thankfully, he never made a pass at me. No one did because no one wanted a wolf that couldn't shift and was basically considered a rogue upon my arrival. That was one thing working in my favor.

I looked in the cracked mirror above the wash tub and made quick work of brushing through my long hair, throwing it into two French braids. When was the last time I cut it? I couldn't even remember. I quickly brushed my teeth and splashed some water on my face. I had two clean sets of clothes to choose from. I grabbed the rst set, a faded blue t-shirt that was a bit too big and a pair of black leggings and I was ready to go. Taking two steps at a time, I made my way up from the basement to the rst oor where I was going to make breakfast.

No sooner than I walked through the kitchen did my headache begin when I found the Alphas' daughter, Heather, perched on the countertop locking lips with yet another male. He was shamelessly felling her up, his hand groping her underneath her shirt. I could feel myself trying to suppress my gag reux. I had a few options: leave them be and make breakfast late, pissing off the entire house. Disturb what would be the start of a porno and have Heather on my ass about it for goddess knows how long. Or, the very risky option three. Have a little fun with it.

I was a hybrid. Since I didn't have any friends or family, I had plenty of time to self-evaluate, so to speak. My wolf Sierra also helped a great deal. I was probably only scratching the surface, but it was better than nothing.

"Heather I need to make breakfast, could you please take this elsewhere?" I asked as nicely as I could, trying to go with the rst option.

"Tell that sleezy hoe to piss off and get her ass out of here!" My wolf yelled.

She blatantly ignored me as she did many times before.

"Option three is looking much better now." My wolf spoke.

"Couldn't agree more" I smirked to myself.

It took a moment before I decided what my sweet revenge would be. With some heavy concentration and a ick of my wrist, I turned on the sink hose attachment and sprayed them down with ice water.

Heather's high pitched scream echoed through the entire house, practically making my ears bleed in protest. I could hardly contain my laughter.

"You did that on purpose!!"

"Did what?" I played innocence, "I was just standing over here". I batted my eyes.

"I know it was you!" She screamed.

"Too bad you don't have any proof," I retorted. "now move so I can make breakfast."

She scoffed at me in disgust and then did the most Heather thing I could think of.

"Mom!!! Sierra was peeping on me and-what's your name?" she whispered the last part to the male.

"Ian", he responded with his hand still on her breast.

"Ian while we were in my room!!"

No sooner did she nish the sentence Luna Tammy came marching into the kitchen. I turned to face her but before I even saw it coming, her hand connected with my face and I saw stars. I hit my head on the counter on my way down and landed uncerimonously on the tile oor. I could taste iron in my mouth and my forehead was wet. She got me good this time.

"How dare you watch my daughter!!" She screeched. "No food for you today. Your lucky I'm letting you off easy." She snared. Her face contorted in such an ugly manner I wondered what the Alpha saw in her. She was very unattractive, her features were harsh and she didn't help the cause. She had an awful haircut that made her look like the 'Karen' she was - no offense to all the genuinely nice Karens out there. Though maybe I was just biased on account of how much I hated her toxic personality. I couldn't help but chuckle at my own thoughts.

"What's so funny?" She said as she narrowed her eyes at me.

I could mostly keep my composure, but there were times such as these that were so unbelievably ridiculous my wolf and I just couldn't help it....

"Do it, do it, do it" Sienna egged on.

Fuck it.

"I just nd it interesting that the Alpha would marry a monster, such as yourself, and procreate this slut of a daughter who can't even remember the name of the man currently sticking his tongue down her throat. You got yourself a real winner there. Like mother like daughter, right?" I said, with a dangerous glint in my eye as I stood to my feet. My 5ft 10in stature and my Alpha lineage were quite intimidating to a 5ft 2in Luna that had mated into the position. Rumor had it she was a slutty omega and Alpha Carl only married her to avoid his rst born being a bastard child. No one knew I was of Alpha blood. No one would even give me the time of day if they could help it. I didn't want them to know either, they didn't deserve to, so I masked my aura all the time.

"CARL!!!" Luna Tammy screamed at the top of her lungs.

"What is it now?" He answered as he strolled into the kitchen moments later. "Where is breakfast?" his brows furrowed in disapproval seeing the lack there of.

"Daddy! Sierra was peeping into my room!" Heather whined.

"And she was disrespectful to me!" Tammy interjected.

Alpha Carl looked me over once before passing his judgment. "4 marks"

I felt rocks sinking in my gut as Tammy and Heather lit up gleefully. A few moments later, Gamma Tyler appeared and placed silver cuffs on my wrists, while wearing thick gloves, careful not to touch them himself. Silver and wolfsbane were the only two weaknesses werewolves possessed. They both burned like a mother fucker. I could feel my skin starting to peel already as Gamma Tyler led me to the center.

The center was literally that, the center of the pack. It's where Alpha Carl decided to deliver all punishments. There was a large tree trunk that had hooks around it. There would be one of his warriors carry out the punishment. '4 marks' meant I was to receive 4 brandings from a piece of metal that was mixed with silver. The added silver would make it so a scar was left behind. Werewolves have accelerated healing, twice as fast as a human would heal, with no scars left behind. But anything with silver will always leave something in its wake.

"You know the drill!" Gamma Tyler spoke.

Unfortunately, this was not my rst branding. I have had 8 others from other 'heinous offenses' over the years. Once for being sick, another for dropping a drinking glass when Heather pushed me out of her way, the list goes on. Never had I had 4 at once though. I hesitantly lifted my arms to the trunk where the Gamma secured the cuffs to one of the hooks. He lifted my shirt, moved it up to my neck and ipped my hair over my shoulder.

The warrior on duty began placing the cold 5 inch-diameter metal face branding into the hot re. The agonizing wait began. I could sense pack members gathering at a distance to watch in horror or delight or maybe both. I wasn't sure at that point.

"You, Sierra Wilson, on this day are to receive 4 marks for disrespecting our Luna and our Alpha's daughter." Gamma Tyler proclaimed.

I could hear the on-duty warrior pull the branding from the re. I stupidly glanced over my shoulder, it was white hot. Goddess help me. My breathing became shallow and I could feel the blood draining from my face. I faced back to my post focusing on the claw marks that were undoubtedly mine from last time.

"Count, Slave" Heather whispered in my ear.

Not a moment later, I felt the rst brand burn into my skin. Was my skin hot or cold? I couldn't decide as my adrenaline kicked in and I let out a cry of pain.

"Count!" She yelled this time.

"O-one" I said with a shaky breath. I had to focus on my breathing or I would pass out for sure.

The second was just as bad if not worse, landing on the middle of my back over my spine.

"T-two" Another shaky breath. "A-hhh"

"Th-th-three" Goddess help me. My wolf whimpered in my head.

"Four" I said quietly, feeling relieved knowing that that was it.

"FIVE AND SIX" Heather yelled, burning two more marks into my already damaged back. I could feel my tears owing freely and snot running down my face as I tried to compose myself and save what little dignity I had left. I vaguely heard Gamma Tyler chastising Heather for adding two herself, breaking alpha orders. But nothing would be done about it. Nothing ever was.

"Running out of room there, slave." Heather snickered as she walked away.

Once you run out of space on your back, you were done. Like done done, death sentence done. Alpha orders. I don't think I ever met anyone who ran out of space, but I knew I was a hell of a lot closer now. I felt my cuffs being undone and I fell to the ground for the second time today. Goddess, I should have just stayed in bed and pretended to be dead. When I said I wanted to go outside today, this is not what I had in mind.

I lay there for what felt like hours, the sun began to set and I nally found the will to stand. I was going to have a mountain of work to catch up on. But that could wait. If this was my only opportunity, I was going to take it. I slowly shued my way through the forest until I found a small pond. It called to me. I carefully rid myself of my clothes, not caring at the moment if anyone was around or not. Though I did have exceptional hearing and I knew no one was around. The only sounds were those of nature and my stomach eating itself. My feet were the rst to enter the chilly September waters. The rest of me followed suit, going extra slow as my back began to submerge in the dark, icy waters. I oated on my back staring up at the stars as my pain began to subside. Thankfully, I seemed to heal pretty quickly, faster than the average werewolf, probably on account of being a hybrid.

"How did we get here" I asked nobody. My wolf was silent, undoubtedly contemplating our life as I was. We weren't bad. Maybe a bit too mouthy, but for good reason. How long could you be pushed around before you pushed back? How long would it take to respect yourself enough to stand up for yourself? I have never backed down before. Why start now?

"We need to survive" my wolf spoke up.

"Why?" My voice cracked in my own head.

"Mate will need us" Sienna whined.

"We don't even know if we will ever nd him." That thought made me sad. It wasn't uncommon for wolves to never nd their fated mate. So many packs, so much ground to cover. A lot of wolves will take a chosen mate after a certain age. I didn't bother to think about my mate much, seeing as I could hardly leave the packhouse. Maybe one day things will change. I could only dream.