Moonlight

Life got interesting this year. Maybe, three months ago. I was on one of my secret midnight adventures. It was a full moon. I was jogging around, when I came to this enchanting clearing. It was a cluster of rock. All bathed in the moonlight. It was so magical, I felt *drawn* to it, somehow. I climbed on, and I watched the moon gleaming down on me. And then, I felt something shift inside me. I blinked out of my trance, and walked home, the shining moon still fresh in my mind.

The next time I felt this weird feeling again was the next month. The only thing, I remember, I could put together, was that it was a full moon again. And then, the next day, I felt it again. Then, I was at home, and I happened again. My teeth started feeling uncomfortable, and my feet, and fingers, until I toppled over from my chair, and I glanced at myself in the mirror. I was a wolf.

I had a shiny coat, gray-white, and I still had my green-gray eyes. My hands were paws, my mouth, my snout. I looked around in a frenzy. I jumped in surprise. What was going on? Was I hallucinating? I concentrated only human qualities. It was getting harder. And then, *poof!* I was human. I blinked a couple of times, and quickly put aside my homework. I called out, saying I was going for a jog. I quickly ran out, keeping my pace, all the way to the rocks. I stopped. I breathed in, and exhaled. It had been quite the distance. I slowed my heart rate, resting a little. I was surrounded by firs, and I knew from personal experience, that no one except me, ever came around here. I crept onto the rocks, and I felt the strange sensation all over again. I willed against it, and it stopped. I grinned at the achievement. Then I concentrated on my wolfish snout, paws, extreme hearing. And there I was again, the wolf me.

Now, it's been three months, and it's now. I have almost mastered my powers, and luckily, I haven't turned into a wolf at school. I know I am a werewolf. But aren't werewolves supposed to be wolfish, and human-like? Not one or the other? And not be able to control their powers? Well, I can. And it scares me that I cannot rely on anyone with out being hauled off to some science experiment. And my life would never be mine.

School let out, and kids were screaming. The eighth graders, ignorant with gratitude. Middle school was over for them. I shrugged. My friends dashed away, excited that school was over. I would be, likewise. *If* I hadn't been a werewolf.

As I was quietly biking, enjoying the breeze in the warming sun, I realized the sensation was taking over. I couldn't afford to turn into a wolf on a bike, so I concentrated. For a second, I

glimmered into a wolf, but it was only half a second. I saw another biker look at me curiously, but that was all. I jumped off my bike, and locked it to my porch rail. I got out my key, opened the door. No one was home yet. Good, I thought, than literally slapped myself. Three months ago, I had nothing to hide. Now, it's definitely been the hardest three months of my life. I hate lying, and being afraid of every situation, as if it's completely new. I don't my werewolf side at all.

Summer had officially started. I heard someone at the door. "Who is it?" I shouted. "Me?" A teasing voice said. I would've laughed, and opened the door if I knew who '*me*' was. "Um, who is that?" I asked. "It's me. You know, you're *neighbor*." I pursed my lips. I was such an idiot! "Oh my gosh. I am so sorry Ralph." I said. "It totally slipped my mind." He grinned. He was my tutor. "Schools out-Technically and I really need to talk to you." He said, sitting down on the couch. "Now, this may sound weird, but… Are you a wolf?"

I did a double take. "How- When-" He cut me off. "I've been one since I was eight. I'd know. And you're almost thirteen. You need to start running with a pack, or you're gonna find yourself in some serious trouble." He said. I stared in disbelief. There were more like me? "Show me." I managed. He grinned. He instantly turned into a dark gray wolf, with the same electric blue eyes. I stared. I found myself a wolf all of a sudden too.

"You're an alpha to a pack of werewolves like me?" I said, as soon as I was a human again. A pack. Of people like me. Or wolves like me. "Yeah, and when I turned thirteen, monsters were always after me." He shuddered. "But aren't we the monsters?" I said. "No." He laughed. "No way. People. Warlocks, to be exact. They want us all killed." He grimaced. "Why?" I asked, suddenly scared and aware I'd left the door unlocked. "They want the power of magic to be focused on them. If we were all gone, the magic would focus- I'll explain later. You need to come now." He sat straight up, sniffing the air. "Someone's coming. Let's go." And just like that, I became part of a pack.

I was amazed. People and wolves trotting peacefully by each other, some bringing in prey, people, cleaning, cooking, something. The wolf part of me eyed the bloodied meat with hunger. The human part of me said *yuck*, and, *do NOT eat that*. Of course, I was in human form, so the human side won. Ralph barked. Howls arose. One howl joined the others, one after another. I couldn't help myself. I howled, and howled, until I realized I was wolf. I stared at my paws. "Intruders. Hayley, go with Luke and Toni. They'll fight for you. But you may need to fight for yourself." He looked grim, and barked to a completely black wolf, and a completely white wolf. "Scratch that. Meet Luke and his sister Jade." The wolves' eyes gleamed. They barked. I was still wolf, and completely understood it. I barked back. They cocked their heads. *They're here for you. They want* all *of us. They want the magic we rightfully won. They will abuse the power, and take all our lands away. We are a pack, and now you are part. Fight.* I nodded, and gulped. I had no idea, except that we were the good guys. At least I hoped so. I had no idea what the situation was. The last day of school was about to be the last day of my life. I shook the thought away. *Let's do this.*

I smelled them before I saw them. They smelled of raw fish, spoiled raw fish. And a musky

tang, along with the smoky smell. Once I saw them, I saw that they were more demonic than us. We were just wolves. They had a wild gleam in their eyes, but fogged over, like there wasn't anything in their brain. They had gnarled fingernails, and their hair was all over the place. Filthy. Covered in mud. And their clothes were ripped, barely staying on them. I instantly felt the dangerous vibe they were giving. I braced myself. I watched as the wolves launched themselves into battle. They were fast, clever, and smarter than the average wolf- They still had the mind of a human. I watched, and then Luke and Jade left from my side, pounding into the fight. I gulped. I was alone. The only thing I could do was to join…

I launched my self into the crowd. I slashed with my paws, and snapped with my sharp teeth. And for the first time in my life, I felt really alive. My heart pulsing, all my senses at their best, helping me defend myself. I could tell whether the mass in front of me was friend of foe in an instant. I finally stopped, and drew back.

The battle was finished in less than a few seconds after that. The ragged, filthy people retracted, and ran the opposite way. But the rest of the wolves looked grim. I trotted to Ralph. "What's wrong?" I asked, curiously looking around. "They've never stayed this long. They always retreat within the first minutes." I glanced around. No one seemed all that hurt, but apparently this was bad. "Well, it always happens when a new werewolf is in our midst, but never this long." My brow furrowed in worry. Was I causing all this?

I settled down, slumping onto the grass, my wolfish paws in front of me. *So, Ralph you're an alpha. That's cool…* I cursed myself. 'That's cool'? *Yeah, I guess. These guys used to wild and rampant, and not much better than those warlocks who tried to kill us. My friend and I really set the tone, and whipped them back into shape.* Ralph panted, and licked his muzzle. *I gotta go. We need to talk later. So you understand everything. See you later.* He barked. He cocked his head. *Sure. What are you doing?* I asked. *Going to say to your parents, that you were accepted into some school of math or something like that. I've a got a few tricks. I'll make it look official. To stay safe, stay with Luke and Jade.* He padded off. I got up, and trotted to Luke. His dark coat shimmered. I nosed him. He turned around, and then turned human. "Hi there. Hayley, is it?" He asked. As a human, he had tanned skin, golden blonde hair, and a rugged figure. He had blue eyes. I guess when you're a wolf, your eye color doesn't change. Jade bounded over, and turned human, mid-leap. She had the same golden hair, and blue eyes, but she was more pale, and was more slim than muscular. "Hello there." She said calmly. "Welcome to the pack, Hayley." And that's how my life changed.