

Chapter 1 of I Claim You, Mate Online

Elara's POV

"Save me, Elara!"

I thought it would be another quiet night... until my father screamed my name.

Three men stormed into our house with hockey sticks. The floor was covered with broken glass and smashed furniture.

I ran to my father and wrapped my arms around his body. The loan sharks swung their sticks, ready to strike.

Pain shot through my leg when one hit me. I almost collapsed.

"Move away! Tonight we'll kill your dad and sell his kidneys!" one of them shouted.

I shook my head, sobbing. "No! Please!"

But my father reeked of alcohol. He shoved me aside and turned to face the men. "Leave me. Take her with you as compensation."

I could not believe my ears. The smell of alcohol reached my nostrils, making me realize my dad was drunk.

Tears streamed out of my eyes. "Dad..." My voice broke. I couldn't breathe. He couldn't have said that—right?

The men sneered. "Carl Hayes, that's the only way left."

Two of the men grabbed my arms tightly. I shook my head and begged them.

"Please, give me some time. I will pay your money soon."

"Really? How will you pay ten thousand dollars so soon?"

I had been trying to make ends meet by taking on part-time jobs. I was working very hard to settle my father's debt.

He was an alcoholic person. But he was my father; I could not leave him.

That was how I was living my life.

"We are giving you a week. You are turning eighteen next week, right? We will sell you at a high price. A virgin omega... that's what every man wants to ruin in their bed."

I lowered my head in shame. My dad was listening to them shamelessly. I just wanted to die.

He was a businessman who lost all the money in business. My mom left him when he started gambling. Then he started to drink and beat me for money.

I was a young omega who struggled to live a normal life in the Blood Rose Pack.

When the men finally left, I couldn't sleep a single minute that night.

By sunrise, I packed my books and walked out without once looking back.

"Elara, please don't cry."

I hugged my best friend, Julia, and poured my heart out. We were outside the campus.

Julia was rich, but she never judged my poor status. She always tried to console me.

I enrolled in 'Moonlight University' three months ago. It was a university for the elite. I was fortunate enough to be admitted here thanks to a scholarship.

"What will you do now? What about your Mom? You can shift with her," Julia said when I broke the hug.

I leaned against a tree, lowered my head, and shook it in denial. "She has her own life. I heard she is getting married soon."

"Why don't you tell her that your dad is treating you like this?"

"I don't want to be a burden for her."

Julia sighed in disappointment. "You will get a way, Elara. Don't worry."

I nodded my head. "Tomorrow is my audition for a piano competition. If I win, I can manage—" I paused when we heard some girls cheering loudly for something.

Julia and I exchanged a glance, then moved toward the crowd that was getting bigger.

"What happened?" Julia asked a girl who was about to walk past us.

The girl replied with a surprised look. "Don't you know? The Kingston brothers threw a party in the hall. No one is going to classes today."

The Kingston brothers...

They were campus kings, just like the 'King' in their surname. They were twenty two years old twin brothers who were in their senior year.

Although they were twins, they had different faces and different personalities.

One of them was an extrovert, wild, and short-tempered, while the other was an introvert, cold, and calculative.

Both of them were our head Alpha, Gray Kingston's sons. So boys feared them while girls were head over heels for them.

"Party? At this hour? It's morning!" I uttered in disbelief.

"Who cares? The party will go on for the whole day," the girl said, shrugging her shoulders in pride.

"Oh my god! So today is the party day? Can we freshman-year students join the party too?" Julia asked, jumping in excitement.

"Of course, you can," a girl in senior year replied.

I usually did not go to parties. Those were only for rich people. I preferred to attend class and focus on my studies. It would help me live a better life.

"Julia, you can join them. I think I should go back home since no one is going to the classes today."

Since it was the Kingston brothers' plan, no professors would dare to take classes today; otherwise, they would make trouble for them.

I was about to turn around when Julia grabbed my hand and started to pull me inside the campus.

She dragged me to the hall where the party was going on. "Don't try to hide it from me. I know why you always avoid campus parties."

I was surprised when I heard her. "W-Why?" I mumbled.

She grinned at me and winked. She leaned close to my ear and whispered, "Because you fell for one of the Kingston brothers."

My eyes widened in shock. I blinked and thought, 'How did she know?'

I blushed, lowering my head to hide my flushed face.

I was in love with Trevor Kingston. I fell for him a long time ago. He was the reason I studied so hard to get into the same university as him.

Julia chuckled while pulling me inside the hall.

The party hall was filled with loud music and smoke. Boys and girls were dancing while holding glasses of drinks.

Food and alcohol were totally free. The campus kings were paying for everyone as if they did not care about their father's money.

I wondered if the head Alpha was aware that his sons were doing these things in their university.

I felt awkward around the people who were glancing at me. I was wearing a casual dress. But they were fully prepared; perhaps they were aware of the party beforehand.

When Julia went to the washroom, I decided to leave the hall quietly. I did not want to prevent her from enjoying what she liked.

"Elara, where are you going?" One of my classmates asked me with a loud voice so that I could hear.

I turned my head to her and waved my hand while stepping backward.

"I'm leaving."

My back collided with a hard chest, causing me to freeze.

When I turned around, I saw a boy wearing a white shirt and black pants. He was none other than Kevin Kingston.

"K—Kevin," I whispered before I could stop myself.

His features were sharp, and his eyes were attractive. He looked like he was either sleepy or drunk. His shirt was half unbuttoned, revealing his abs.

He raised a brow, a half-smirk playing at his lips. "Do I know you?" His tone was smooth but carried the bite of arrogance.

"I—I'm sorry," I said quickly, stepping back.

Kevin chuckled softly, shaking his head. "You freshmen really need to learn how to walk. This isn't a charity campus, sweetheart."

A few nearby girls laughed, eager to echo him. My cheeks burned, but I bit my tongue.

Then, with a lazy shrug, he grabbed a bottle from a passing waiter and held it out to me. "Here. Make yourself useful—hand this to the next person who walks through that door. Consider it your welcome task."

I blinked, unsure if he was teasing or testing me. "O-Okay."

He leaned close enough for me to smell the faint trace of whiskey on his breath. "Relax. You're shaking like I just proposed." His smirk deepened before he turned and walked away, swallowed by the crowd and flashing lights.

I let out the breath I didn't realize I'd been holding. I did not know how it was called a punishment. But I was happy that he let me go easily.

"Someone is coming!" someone shouted.

I straightened and clutched the bottle tighter, moving toward the entrance.

The noise in the hall dimmed suddenly, replaced by a charged silence. A pair of brown boots stepped through the doorway, slow and deliberate.

I looked up—and froze.

Trevor Kingston.

When his name echoed through the hall, my pulse stumbled. I told myself I was just curious — but the ache in my chest said otherwise.

My heart clenched when I saw his cold eyes. His black leather jacket and black jeans gave him a hot appearance with that cold look on his face.

I had clawed my way into Moonlight University on scholarship. Not because I belonged here—I didn't. I was just a poor omega in the Blood Rose Pack. But because of him.

Because of Trevor Kingston.

He was the reason I studied until my fingers bled from turning pages, the reason I sacrificed sleep, the reason I believed that maybe if I could stand in his world, I wouldn't feel so invisible.

His gaze held a power of dominance. Even though he was very young, people in our pack say he could make older Alphas on their knees in submission.

Unlike Kevin, he was more interested in business. Perhaps that was why people felt that he was one step ahead of Kevin to get his father's throne.

He was hot, and his aura was unmatched. If Kevin was wild like fire, he was cold like ice.

I gulped when his eyes narrowed at me.

I took a shaky breath and stepped forward. "I—I just wanted to give you this—"

But before I could finish, someone bumped into me from behind. The bottle slipped from my hand and shattered on the marble floor, the sound echoing through the silence like a gunshot.

Gasps rippled through the crowd. My heart pounded. I dropped to my knees automatically, gathering the pieces with trembling hands.

Trevor's boots stopped inches from me. I could feel his gaze, sharp as a blade, on the top of my head.

I looked up—and met those icy eyes.

He didn't need to raise his voice. "Who the hell are you?"