

The One He Claimed Chapter 1

Chapter 1: Birthday

Sophie

When I woke up this morning, I raced to Amelia's room, leaping onto her bed. "Wake up, sleepyhead. Time to see if you smell any delicious scents!" I say excitedly.

Today is my sister's 18th birthday. As the daughter of the Alpha, my sister's birthday will be the event of the year. Every Alpha in a 100-mile radius will be coming to her party tonight to see if she is his mate.

"Sophie," she groans, pulling a pillow over her head. "I was up past midnight last night to see if I could smell my mate, but he's not here. He's not in our pack."

"Well, that just means that you're likely to be mated to an Alpha! Oh, I can't wait to find my mate," I say, pulling the pillow off her head.

I'm two years younger than my sister and this is the first time that I will really get to see what it's like to be at a party for an Alpha female. I've heard the omegas whispering about it and I know my mother has been planning the event with my sister for at least a year. Decorations, dance floor, space for dining, and food preparation have all been underway for nearly two weeks. In the last 48 hours, the entire pack and packhouse has been chaotic.

"Sophie," my mother says quietly, walking into Amelia's room. "I need to speak to your sister. Go get some breakfast and have the omegas send some up for your sister and I."

'The talk,' I mouth to Amelia so my mother can't see. "Yes, mother," I say out loud before hopping off the bed and walking up to hug my mother. She looks worried, which is strange because she should be excited after all the preparation she has done for the last year. But she gives me her usual hug before I step away and turn to my sister.

"See you soon, Amelia," I say, walking out of the room.

I walk downstairs, seeing that everyone is still buzzing about the party tonight. Everyone loves my sister. She's sweet and kind and as her younger sister, I would know. She's never been mean or catty to me or anyone. She's one of the kindest women I've ever met. I just hope that her mate recognizes what a gem she is.

I'm sure he will. And if she's lucky, he'll be an Alpha. That will make her a Luna and she can show that pack all the kindness that she has shown ours.

After sending trays of food up to my mother and sister and eating my own breakfast, I go in search of my father. Because I'm his daughter, I usually don't knock on his office

door unless I know he has company. I lean my ear against the door and when I don't hear anything, I open the door to find my father with his head in his hands. I can smell the scent of scotch and I see an empty glass beside him on the desk.

"Dad, is everything okay?" I ask, worried. First my mother, now my father.

His head snaps up as he looks at me.

"Soapy, I didn't hear you come in, he says, s**g the glass off his desk and putting it in the drawer along with the bottle sitting beside him.

Soapy. It's what my sister called me when I was born. My father loved it and never dropped the nickname, regardless of how many times my mother scolded him for using it.

"Why do you look so worried, Dad? Isn't today a good day?"

"Of course, sweetheart," he says, standing to walk over to me and hugging me.

My parents have always been very protective. No matter how many friends we had, we were never allowed to participate in their 18th birthday parties. That's another reason I'm so excited for tonight. I've never actually seen anyone find their mate before. Well, I have within the pack, but usually you can tell who will be mated to whom. They start spending time together before they turn 18, like they are feeling the bond before it completely forges. Then, on the 18th birthday of the youngest of the two, they yell 'MATE' and rush into each other's arms. It's very romantic.

But I've never seen a ranked member find their mate. All ranked members have parties like Amelia's, or at least, I assume they are like Amelia's. I've never been to one. No matter how much I begged and pleaded, I was never allowed. Amelia either. So, today is extra exciting for us.

"Is something wrong with the party? Do you need help?" I ask.

"No, honey," he says, looking at his watch. "Look at the time. You should go start getting ready"

My father's voice remains sad, even though he pastes a smile on his face.

"If you need anything, let me know," I say, as he leads me to the door of his office.

"What I need is for my Soapy to go get ready for her sister's party."

"Okay, Dad," I say.

The rest of the afternoon, I get ready. Our omegas put my long chocolate colored hair into an intricate half-up half-down hairdo. They put just a bit of makeup on my face, to 'enhance my

natural beauty', as they say. Since Amelia is the guest of honor, I'll be greeting our guests with my parents as they arrive, so I have to be done earlier than she does.

However, I want to see my sister all dressed up before everyone else does. As her sister, I think I deserve a sneak peak of how beautiful she is. My sister's hair is a lighter shade of brown than mine is. Where my hair is straight, hers has a natural curl and the omegas have enhanced that. She's stunning.

"Amelia! You look gorgeous!" I say, walking into her room.

"Thanks, Sophie. You look great as well," my sister says.

"Oh Amelia. I'm so excited for you! Tonight is going to be perfect," I tell her.

"I hope so, Soph. I really do."

"Well, he'll get one look at you and there's no way he'd ever reject you. You look like a princess."

"Thank you.

'Sophie, the first cars are arriving, where are you?' my mother asks me in the mind link.

'Coming, mother,' I say.

"I have to go. I'll see you down there."

My sister holds on to my hand as if she wants to say something as I pull away. I stop, turning to look at her, seeing the indecision on her face.

"I love you, Soph."

"Move you too!" I say, moving out of her room and heading downstairs. I put a smile on my face as I walk out the front door of the packhouse to begin greeting our nearly 200 guests.