

Chapter One

Lily POV

"Hurry up, Slave! Goddess, you have nothing to work with anyway! Did you even bathe?!"

I rolled my eyes for what felt like the millionth time. Why Luna decided her spoiled, stuck up daughter, who also hated my guts, would be the perfect person to help me get ready for my wedding was beyond me. Although 'helping' was far reached. So far, she had pulled me out of bed by my hair, handled me into my creaky chair in front of my sorry excuse for a vanity, and screamed at me to get ready. Since then, she had done nothing but d**k around on her phone and occasionally insult me.

"Yes, Evelyn." I clipped out. She snorted in response and went back to her phone.

I was nearly ready. My thick red hair was pulled up into a French twist, my veil tucked into it nicely. I had no makeup to speak of, so I had no choice but to go natural. It didn't bother me much, my skin was awless in terms of acne. I would have liked something to try and conceal how sallow my cheeks were and the bags under my eyes though. I was extremely pale, due to a lack of food and nutrition, which made me look sickly. My full lips were dry and peeling slightly. I hadn't had a drink in over twenty-four hours, and how I wish I could say it was from nerves. Sadly, it wasn't. I had a straight, proud nose so I guess that was a plus. The only feature I really loved was my eyes. They were unbelievably green, like emeralds but... more. They almost shone with the depth of their colour.

My gaze swept down to my dress. It was gorgeous. The only thing I had ever received from the Alpha in the thirteen years I'd been at this pack.

Alpha Theo and his Luna, Tina of the Snow Moon Pack had "adopted" me when I was ve years old. I have no recollection of my life or family from before. Many times I had tried to remember, but it was black, fuzzy. Eventually, I'd stopped trying. My rst memory was thirteen years ago, entering Snow Moons borders and staggering around until I came across the packhouse.

Foolishly, I'd raided the kitchen as I had been starving, and the Luna had caught me redhanded. Terried and alone, she had taken me in. Though I quickly found out she was not a Luna of mercy as I was made to clean, cook and serve the pack with harsh punishments if I strayed or argued or talked back.

Her daughter, Evelyn, was the same age as me, and just as cruel as her parents. Her main source of enjoyment was to torment me.

Once, when we were ten, I had spilled a glass of orange juice on the oor. Evelyn had walked right up to me and dumped the remaining glass over her head, immediately screaming for her parents, claiming I had thrown a glass at her and then dumped the juice on her when I missed. None of her friends had backed me up, and I'd spent three days in a cell in the basement with no food or water and merciless beatings from the Alpha and Luna both. I had no idea how I survived, and at the time, I wasn't overly happy that I did.

Over the years however, I'd simply learned to stay away from everyone as much as possible. When that wasn't possible, I just kept my eyes down and my mouth shut. The punishments happened less and less, but when they did happen, they were extreme. If Evelyn had a bad day at school, she would take it out on me. Sometimes her friends would join in, leaving me in whatever state when they were done. More often than not, I'd wished for death. Until I got my wolf, Aya.

It was thanks to her that I found my voice again; My will to ght back somewhat. She was strong, snarky, and my only friend. She was the only reason I'd managed to keep my sanity. I smiled to myself, remembering the night she nally came forward.

****FLASHBACK****

I was in the last room of the main oor, just nishing up mopping. Suddenly a voice had me screaming and dropping the mop, splashing water everywhere.

"Hey!"

"Who...who's there?" I asked nervously. I spun in a slow circle, looking for a sign of another person.

Laughter. "No need to be so jumpy. I won't hurt you, Lily."

I realized the voice was in my head. " You're my wolf!"

"Bingo!"

"Is that your name? Bingo?" I asked. Odd.

"What? No silly girl. My name is Aya, and it is so nice to nally be here with you."

"It's really nice to meet you too! I thought... I mean... I gured..." I trailed off helplessly.

"That you didn't have a wolf? I know."

"You do?"

She sighed. "I've always been here, Lily. I know those assholes told you that you 'couldn't possibly have a wolf' and all the other bullshit they've put you through. I'm so sorry. I'm sorry I wasn't here to help you. But I'm here now, and you'll always have me to watch your back. f**k this pack, and f**k them for the Hell they've put you through!"

I laughed, full of joy. I had a wolf! This was the best day of my life!

"Oh, Lily?"

"Yes, Aya?" I answered.

"Happy Birthday."

I grinned so much, that I didn't even mind I had to re-mop the oor.

**** END FLASHBACK****

That was last month, my eighteenth birthday. I hadn't shifted yet, as wolves shift for the rst time on the full moon after their eighteenth birthday. I couldn't wait to see what Aya looked like.

My reminiscing was interrupted by Evelyns high pitched voice.

"What the f**k are you smiling about?"

Aya snarled in my head. I shook my head but declined to answer. Evelyn narrowed her eyes at me and stood up, moving towards me. She stood behind me with her hands on her hips, c****g her head to the side.

"You know, Slave, I think you could use a little color in your cheeks." She smiled wickedly.

I immediately sprang up and tried to dash to the door, but she was quick. Grabbing my arm, she spun me around and landed a vicious blow to my left cheek. While I was still stunned, she repeated the action to my right cheek.

Tears sprang to my eyes to accompany the stinging on my face. Aya roared in my head, momentarily deafening me while Evelyn laughed. I didn't even hear the insult she threw at me. Holding my cheeks, I turned swiftly for the door, exiting the room with Evelyn hot on my heels.

"You'll be back, you know." She said. "I know you think this marriage is your ticket out of here, but it's not. As soon as your groom realizes who my parents are marrying him off to, he'll throw you out faster than you can blink. I'll be surprised if he even goes through with the ceremony!" She hissed. Stepping in front of me, she grabbed my throat roughly.

"You will always be nothing but a slave!"

Evelyn released me, shoving me back a few feet. Without another glance, she marched down the hall and out of sight around the corner. I leaned against the wall, taking deep breaths.

"She's wrong. Don't listen to her, Lily." My wolf tried to soothe me.

"She's right, though. I've always been a slave. Who could possibly want me? Look at me!"

"I am. You're stronger than you realize. You've been through so, so much, and you're still here. Still standing. Even if this guy throws you out, we won't come back here."

I blinked. " You'd go rogue?"

"I told you I'd always be here with you. Even if we had to be a rogue."

Tears welled up again, but this time from happiness.

" Wow. Thank you. I love you, Aya."

"I love you too, Lily. Now, let's go get married!" She cheered with mock enthusiasm. I laughed quietly.

Straightening my dress and my hair, I began walking down the hallway. With each step, nerves began to pool in my stomach.

See, the craziest thing about my situation was that I actually didn't know who I was marrying. This whole thing was arranged without my knowledge, at least, up until last week.

I'd been a server at the yearly Alphas Meeting, which was at Snow Moon this year. The next day, Alpha Theo and Luna Tina dragged me into the Alphas' oce and told me I was getting married. They never said to whom, and they never gave me the option to say no. All they said was they were getting more for my hand in marriage than I was worth, and they were glad to be nally getting rid of me. I couldn't say I was unhappy about the prospect of leaving this pack, but I was scared of marrying an unknown man. I couldn't fathom why anyone would want me to be honest.

I assumed it was someone from an ally pack who wanted a slave. The more I'd thought about this, the more I believed it true. After all, Alpha Theo could pick any random girl to replace me.

Lost in my fears, I nally reached the grand double doors to the hall where the ceremony was taking place. Voices buzzed from inside. I felt like vomiting, but also something... else.

My head began to swim, and I was suddenly too hot. My heart rate was picking up quickly, and I felt lightheaded.

Was I about to pass out minutes before my wedding?