

Shift - Chapter 1 by MishanAngel

Chapter 1

*** 17 years ago ***

I screamed out, the pain becoming too much. Here, on the floor of the dungeon, in the cage that was provided for me, I was going to have my fourth pup. It was the same every time. On this dirty disgusting floor, alone outside of the pack doctor, I'd give birth to my pup and they would be swiftly taken from me.

“Come on, Katerina. You'll be free after this one.”

The doctor stood in the corner. He was told not to touch me, not to comfort me. Only my pups. They only wanted them, not me. It made his words surprising; he'd never spoken to me before now.

Alpha Devon Cross, my mate, my love, my everything. In high school he was the one all the girls crushed on. He was the one that all the she-wolves dreamed to have as their mate. Someone like me though, an Omega, wasn't good enough for an Alpha like him. I thought I'd be lucky if a kind, lower status wolf was my mate. I was so wrong.

When I turned 18, Devon found me, and took me right there in the classroom. We were mates. Me, an Omega, fated to an Alpha. But that first time we made love, he didn't mark me. Or the second. Or the third. Or any time after that. It wasn't until we graduated that I got the nerve to ask why he hadn't marked me. My wolf and I were getting restless, and we wanted to be claimed fully by our mate. Devon, the soon to be Alpha, laughed in my face.

“You think some Omega is going to be my Luna? How stupid are you? You're my fuck toy, Katherine. My fuck toy and I'll do what I want with you, when I want. But believe me, marking you will never happen.”

I still remember those words as they shattered everything I thought about mates, about love, and about him. He was cruel and terrible, much worse

than his father who already ruled our pack out of fear. He didn't even know my name.

Another scream tore from my throat as a contraction rippled through my body. Sweat poured down my face. I hated him. I cursed him with every single breath over these nine years. Devon took a woman named Francesca as his Luna. She was a beautiful woman from another pack, part of an alliance Devon and his father worked out. However, she was a spiteful, jealous, and terrible woman. She was selfish and spoiled, doing nothing a Luna should do for her pack. I became the focus of most of her torture though. She knew I was Devon's fated. That only I would be able to provide the powerful heirs that he wanted.

Normally, I was kept away from the pack house. I was rounded up and sent to live with the other Omegas in a barn house on the edge of the territory. That was home, with my fellow Omegas. But I'd been brought in when Devon felt like fucking me or torturing me.

At first, he tried having pups with his Luna. But she miscarried twice and the third time the pup didn't last a week. He tried to get a witch to figure out what was wrong but from the rumors, she said the Moon Goddess cursed him for refusing the bond. That's what led to him bringing me in to be his pup-maker. I thought maybe, if I gave him a pup, he'd realize we were meant to be together. That we had a place and that he'd be kinder to me.

My first pup was born. I heard their cry, and I laughed through the tears. Even though I'd given birth in the dungeon, on a dirty blanket in winter, I'd given my Alpha what he always wanted. I reached out to the doctor who had taken my pup from me, to hold them for the first time. But the doctor turned away. Leaving me alone, in the dungeon. I screamed and cried. I tried to follow him, take my pup back but I was too weak after giving birth. I didn't even know their gender. Within an hour, I was dumped back in the barn house, where I cried in agony over my lost pup.

It happened again a couple years later. I wasn't quite prepared, but I knew this time what was coming. I tried to ask questions. I tried to get information. But Devon would only abuse me if I asked him and everyone else was under his command to not speak of them in front of me.

The Moon Goddess was so wrong. I wanted to die and after the birth of my second pup, I tried. Multiple times over the couple years before Devon came out to the barn. He threatened that if I continued, he would kill every last Omega in our territory. The people who I had grown up with and who became my family. He knew and he used them to get to me. I stopped, hoping to save them. It was another seven years but he called on me again.

Immediately, I'd become pregnant but this time I was sick. He ended up keeping me in the pack house, more as a slave but to keep an eye that I didn't decide my life was already done. That was when I met him, an Alpha from an enemy pack. He was kind and gentle. His smile lit up the room and he took pity on me. I spilled my heart to him, and he promised to free me. After this birth, he promised to come to me and we would disappear. But as soon as I gave birth to my third pup, Devon kept me locked up in the dungeon.

A couple weeks later, he came down drunk, screaming that he'd never let me go. That I wasn't allowed to leave or be free. He'd been chained to me as his mate and so I'd be chained to him as well. That night I became pregnant for a fourth time.

I met my dear Alan at the border. We had to put it off. I couldn't leave while I was pregnant. I had tried but a dark force prevented me from leaving. Carrying his blood prevented me from crossing the border. And so, I endured this pregnancy. Locked in the dungeon the entire time.

“Come on Katerina, push.”

Squeezing my eyes shut, I grabbed the blanket under me in a tight fist. I yelled out as I pushed through, feeling the pup crown and then slip out. Quickly, the doctor took them in a towel and began clamping and cutting the umbilical cord. There was no reason to cry or scream or be upset. I knew already, I knew the process at this point.

“Doc.”

He didn’t answer.

“Is it a girl or a boy?”

For the first time I asked and the doctor looked at me, surprised. I don’t know if it was my defeated tone or that I even bothered asking, but he stayed quiet for a moment. Only the cries of my pup as he wrapped them in a blanket and carried them out of the cell. He paused just before the stairs up, looking at me and he caught my eye.

“It’s a girl.” His whisper barely reached me but my eyes filled with tears as he left the dungeon.

Closing my eyes, I laid on the ground, exhausted, in pain, and resigned to my fate. Devon would probably kill me now. Unless I’d birthed four girls, I probably was of no use to him and he would kill me. I thought of Alan, my sweet Alan. My savior; the one who showed me that there could be something sweet and gentle in this world. I prayed for my little ones, that one day they might find love, that their father wouldn’t be so cruel to them. I fell asleep and in my prayers turned to begging the Moon Goddess to save them from Devon’s wrath.

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“Kat...Kat tell me you’re okay. Tell me I’m not too late.” A broken voice woke me from my deep sleep.

Everything hurt and I felt weak, my life slipping out of my fingers. But I also felt myself being held, clutched against someone holding me gently.

The light scent of sandalwood and peppermint pushed past the terrible dungeon smells. I knew exactly who it was. If I wasn't so exhausted, I would have smiled.

"You're pretty late." My voice was scratchy and quiet but the hands holding me tightened, telling me that they heard me.

"We are leaving now. I'm bringing you home."

I nodded, leaning against his chest as he picked me up like I weighed nothing. My eyes were too heavy to open so I just listened to the wind as Alan raced through the forest.

"Kat, love, you need to break the bond when we cross the border. After that, you can sleep, alright?"

I nodded again, trying to save my strength. Instead, I focused on his scent. The wind brushing against my skin. The pain radiating in my body. The doctor's words, 'It's a girl'. My last little pup, she'd been the strongest and most agitated one. She twisted and kicked the whole time, never letting up. She wasn't as big as my first, but she was bigger than the one just before her. My being sick affected them and I felt bad for how small they had been born, and two weeks early.

"Okay love. Get ready, I'm about to cross the border."

Taking a deep breath, I felt the twinge of the territory as we raced past it. The air changed as we ran. It felt lighter, easier to breathe. It was cleaner, the smells stronger in the forest.

"I, Katerina Frost, reject Alpha Devon Cross as my mate. I break the ties to the Silver Mountain pack."

Alan held me tight as I screamed into his chest. The pain of my bonds breaking. I started to cry and he hushed me, trying to soothe me. We slowed down and I heard a car door open. For the first time, I felt myself

sit in cloth seats and I looked up at Alan, worry etched on his face along with deep dark circles.

“Are you okay? We need to drive from here.”

My mouth turned up into a smile and my eyes filled with tears again.

“I’m free. I’m finally free.”