

Switched Bride, True Luna Chapter 2 Read

Chapter 3

Emily

As soon as I arrived at home, I saw Chloe and Michael. It was Chloe who saw me first, and she didn't waste a moment in throwing herself at Michael for my benefit.

"I'm so glad you came here to see me!"

I can't stand to see them together. I want to get to my room as quickly as possible.

"I'm sorry it took so long. If I could spend every moment with you, I would." Chloe's laugh filled the foyer. The sound was like nails on a chalkboard. I hated it.

I avoided Michael's gaze, even when I knew he saw me. I don't want to look at him, not after what he did to me. I'd expect it from Chloe, but never from him.

The two were greeting each other with kisses and hugs and touches that disgusted me. I could only think that Michael and his family might have arrived shortly before I did. Just my luck.

Michael's parents stood back, discussing something quietly with my father. I didn't hear them, and I didn't want to. This whole thing seemed like it was planned from the start. But it was an enormous betrayal to me.

All they were doing was Alpha business, and I didn't want to involve myself in it. They seemed to like doing dirty business, and I would have nothing to do with it.

Sometimes, I wish I was never apart of this family. I'd run away if I could, but my inheritance, left behind by my mother, was being withheld from me. She'd left it for me on the condition that I would only get it when I married.

In truth, I think she did this to try and prevent my father from keeping the money from me. Unfortunately, it didn't seem to work. I'd never even seen her will, so I had no way of trying to step in to claim it.

"Emily, there you are," said Chloe in a song-songy voice. I fought the urge to slap her as she hung from Michael's arm.

That was my man. Or he had been. And she had no problems in taking him. It didn't seem like anyone else cared about that.

“Michael, there you are!” said my step-mother as she came into the room with open arms, “Did you two have a wonderful Valentine’s Day?” I froze in my tracks. Was I the only one who didn’t know about Michael and Chloe? Did no one care that he was dating me first?

“Yes, it was wonderful!” said Chloe. I glared over my shoulder at her. My father came up and greeted us all.

“Look at you two, you look great together!” said my father. My hands clenched at my side, and I grit my teeth.

“We couldn’t have asked for a better partner,” cooed Michael’s mom.

“No need to be so frustrated, Emily. We have selected a new partner. I am sure you will find the company of Gregory Baron to be more suitable for you,” said my step-mother, Hannah.

Gregory Baron? He was the retired Alpha of another pack, and he was at least twice my age, if not more. Based on her smirk, she knew it was a horror story for me. He was a wealthy man, which meant a lot of benefits to Blackwood if the packs were to build an alliance.

“He’s already mentioned that he doesn’t mind that your wolf is in hibernation. Not as long as you bear him sons,” continued Hannah.

“It’s an excellent partnership,” my father added.

“Do you really think so?” I asked, horrified. Over the years, my father had grown increasingly cold to me. It used to break my heart, but I suppose it shouldn’t surprise me anymore. He clearly favored Chloe.

“You can’t afford to be picky any longer. You’ve embarrassed this family enough. Now Mr. Baron has offered a hefty sum in exchange for making you his bride,” said Hannah.

Money. That was the answer to everything. They were selling me to another man in order to fill the pack’s bank account. After all, the pack was struggling with finances. They’d even spent my inheritance, the only thing I had left of my mother, to keep themselves afloat.

The inheritance was supposed to be given to me for my own wedding and the life that followed. It was a substantial sum that came with a large amount of land. I suspected it had been used by my step-mother and her pack that had joined Blackwood.

I tried to claim my inheritance back time and time again. No matter what I did or what I threatened, they never gave in. I didn’t have the finances to pursue a lawsuit, and they knew it. In the end, that was the only way I was going to get what I was owed.

"I don't need Mr. Baron's money. Not if you'd give me my inheritance!" I said.

"You don't need the inheritance. Once you're married, you will have all the money you could ever want," said Hannah.

"Besides, the pack needs it. And you owe it to the pack to do something useful for them," said my father. Behind my parents, Chloe snickered.

Any excuse they had to bring me down, they did. It was often about how my wolf was in hibernation. To them, that meant I wasn't a wolf at all. It made me the family's punching bag.

Suddenly, my step-mother charged forward.

"What is that?" she asked, pointing at my neck.

"Is that a hickey?" asked Chloe as she snickered. I touched the side of my neck, but I didn't know what it was. I don't remember seeing anything in the mirror either, but I barely had a chance to look.

"Did you sleep with him, Emily? The man from last night?" Michael asked, his eyebrows furrowing. I didn't confirm or deny it.

"Aw, that's cute. You two make a good fit. He's just some Beta from a small pack, I'm sure you two had a good time. You have more in common with him than our Alpha Michael," Chloe said. She grinned as she looked up at Michael, her hand rubbing his chest.

Michael barely noticed. His eyes were on me.

"A Beta?" my father said, his voice rumbling along the walls. His anger made me flinch.

"This is unacceptable!" Hannah chimed in.

"We are already in talks about your marriage. Now you've gone and sullied yourself with a Beta? Are you kidding me, Emily? How much are you going to mess things up for this pack?" my father said. The tone of his voice was enough to bring tears to my eyes.

I don't even know what I was thinking last night. I'd slept with a man I didn't know. I'd given myself to him when no other man had ever touched me before.

For a long time, my father had told me my only value was in my womanhood. To them, I was already broken, so the rest of me had to be perfect. Now I'd shattered whatever was left of me.

"I'm sorry," I said, my voice soft. I knew I had done wrong. I didn't argue with that.

"That is not enough. This is a crime against your pack, against your Alpha, and against your father! You are to go straight to your room. I don't want to hear a sound out of you until you're ready to dedicate yourself to Gregory Baron." I wanted to explain myself, so I resisted my father's authority. He was trying to use his power as an Alpha to control me.

"I can't argue that things got out of control last night. But why am I the only one to blame here? Chloe and Michael have started a relationship behind my back, and no one seems to even care that they're hanging all over each other. Michael was my fiancé!"

We have decided that Chloe is a better fit for our pack," said Michael's father. My eyes snapped to him, and I glared.

"So this was all pre-planned? And no one thought to tell me?" I said.

"There was no reason for you to know," said Hannah.

I almost exploded, but I bit my lip instead. "The whole situation involves me. Everyone is okay with letting me be betrayed by my family and the man I was supposed to marry?"

"What deals go between Alphas is none of your concern. All you need to do is stand by and do what you're told," my father said.

My fingernails bit into my palms as I clenched my fists. "Does my life mean so little to all of you?"

I felt like their puppet. That was all they ever treated me as.

Michael was supposed to be my escape. But now it seemed like none of it was real. The worst part was that I fell for it.

Tears threatened in my eyes, but a knock on the door behind me stopped this conversation in its track. My father pushed me aside to open it.

Even if this was a tough conversation, I'm not about to leave.

"Greetings, Alpha Crowley. My name is Anthony Martin, and I am Beta of Titanfang Pack. I've come with gifts from my Alpha, as well as a message."

Behind the Beta, several Omegas, the lowest ranking werewolf, were holding numerous luxurious gift boxes and bags.