

Chapter 1 Lucy

"I want to belong to you. My brother, Justice, has nally nished school and nothing is holding me back now. So..." Destiny took a step closer and trailed her nger up the muscular chest. "When are you going to take me and claim me?"

Harley's eyes darkened and he pulled her into his chest. "I've always been ready for this Des. Always. But once I claim you, you have to leave here. You'll have to leave your family. Are you sure you are ready for that?" It was hard enough leaving his mate here when he went home or on business. But once he marked her it would be impossible for him. And he didn't want her to ever be unhappy. Everything he did. Every step he made was for her.

Destiny reached up on her tiptoes and brushed her lips against his. She smiled up at him sweetly and lowered herself back down. "I think you better take me now before I end up wrapped in another man's arms." Her voice was teasing and sultry. And she loved the way that affected him. She watched his eyes ashing between colors and his grip on her tightened.

"From this day forth your place is at my side. I love you Destiny. I've loved you since before you were born. And I am going to spend eternity making you happy." Harley stared down at her paying close attention to her soft lips.

"Harley, there is only one thing left for you to do." She said sweetly.

"Oh? And what is that." Harley ran his ngers through the girl's hair and smiled at her with adoration.

"You've gotta go tell daddy."

Harley chuckled and nodded his head. "He knew this day was coming. I'll promise him that you can visit anytime you'd like, and anyone can always come and visit you."

She placed her hands on his shoulders and gazed up to him. "Thank you... for being my mate." She closed her eyes as he lowered his lips into hers. The two slowly began to move as one and their kiss began to deepen with a rising passion.

Lucy bit her bottom lip as she watched from a distance. She stayed hidden behind the tree and closed her eyes before walking away to give the couple their privacy. She walked along the dirt trail and towards the edge of the pack territory. A fated mate. A partner that was made just for you. Someone who ts into your life like a missing piece of your soul. Your perfect counterpart. And what she would never have.

Lucy was the princess of the werewolves. But she would never be a luna or be anything in a pack hierarchy. No. She had been promised away since before she was even conceived. She was born to be the bride of the vampire prince, Derek. She raised her hand to her forehead as she looked up at the sun. She thought about the man who would soon be her husband and chosen mate. She had met him several times. They met more often when they were children but still tried to meet up at least a couple times in the summer. He was nice, kind and considerate. He was also attractive with his brown hair and amber eyes. But there was nothing romantic about them. They were cordial friends who were bound by duty. Neither one of them had feelings for the other besides the feelings of friendship.

Her father had hoped he would be able to make them fated mates. And he planned on trying at the end of the summer by using his powers as the werewolf king. But it was useless. She felt nothing from him. His kiss on the forehead felt cold and unfeeling. There was no meaning behind it. And she could tell he was just as disinterested. In fact, after their forced meeting times he always disappeared. He never joined them for dinner with the families. His parents always apologized on his behalf and made up an excuse as to why he was absent. Not that Lucy could blame him. She felt the same way. And to think she had to conceive a child with this man.

She glanced behind her and watched her cousin, Destiny, walking hand in hand with her mate, Harley. She was happy for her but also a bit envious. She wanted a love like that. She wanted to be looked at like she was the most precious person in the world. Destiny was Harley's treasure, and it was obvious. He had known Destiny was his mate while her aunt Jin was still pregnant. Since then, he has always come around. He would babysit Destiny, play with her as a child and be her shopping partner. He was whatever she wanted him to be. All the while he was waiting for her to claim him back as mates. A couple years ago she nally felt the mate pull but she wanted to nish school, so she asked him to give her time. Then she wanted to wait to see her younger brother Justice nish high school.

Lucy smiled as their silhouettes disappeared towards the pack house. It was going to be a bit lonely without Destiny. But who was she kidding? She had to marry the vampire prince in just a few months. This was her last summer with the pack.

"What are you doing out here all alone?" A low baritone voice asked her.

Lucy turned her head to see a large toothy grin play over the man's face.

"Trying to escape your ego but alas there is no escape." Lucy teased as a large hand landed on her head roughing it up gently. It was her twin brother Aiden the prince and future king of the werewolves. He had green eyes and auburn colored hair. The girls in the pack always were swooning over his looks with his tall muscular physique. Even she knew her brother was quite the catch. The guys had all stayed away from her though. She never dated. But it wasn't because of her looks. She had brown hair, green eyes and a slender toned physique. She once overheard some guys saying she was gorgeous and how they would give anything to be the vampire prince. And even then, her being the promised bride of the vampire had affected her. Because everyone knew she was already promised to another, the guys looked for dates that could actually lead to something else. And she couldn't blame them. Why date someone who is already engaged?

"You are missing the party. Everyone is here to celebrate Justice's graduation." Aiden smiled down at her.

"Well, it was touch and go with him for a bit so it really is something to celebrate." Lucy teased and listened to her brother's chuckle.

"Hey he graduated, that is all that matters here. We don't need to dwell over how close it was. At the end of the day, he has a diploma." Aiden beamed proudly. "Now it is time for some fun. Justice and I can nally go on the prowl together. I at least want the summer off before I have to start worrying about pack duties." Justice and Aiden were very close only ten months apart. They were all close with their cousins since they had all been born the same day, except for Justice.

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"Good luck with that. I bet dad already has your summer planned out." Lucy watched her brother pout and then drape his arms on her shoulders leaning his weight into her. "Ugh, Aiden you are a moose." She shook her shoulders trying to alleviate his weight off of her.

"Luuuuuuuuuccce, carry me." Aiden whined.

Lucy chuckled. "What are you going to do after this summer when I am gone?" His arms tensed and a low growl sounded in his throat.

"This is stupid. I don't get dad and mom. We don't need this alliance. We are strong enough to take care of ourselves. Plus, we have the dragons, witches and fairies as allies. Hell, we even have demon allies. We don't need to do this with the vampires. If anything, this is just making me resent them more." Aiden growled and sighed angrily.

"Hey, this is my decision, Aiden. Why open up a chance for an unnecessary war? I want there to be peace. And with me as the vampire queen and you the alpha king there will never be a war between us. Besides, if you are going to be a king then I sure as hell better be a queen somewhere." Lucy elbowed him playfully in his stomach. He let out a grunt and lifted his weight off of her. He still had a frown on his face.

"I still think you should hook up with Jasper. He is way cooler than Derek." Aiden said with a smirk. Jasper was Jester and Irene's son. In truth she spent most of her time with him went she went to visit since Derek could never be bothered with her. He stayed during their mandatory lunch together and he was gone. So she spent the rest of her time with Jasper.

"No way I need Jasper as my best friend there." Lucy giggled shaking her head. He was her friend and a good one at that. But that was it.

"What happens if you meet your fated mate at some point? You may run into him after you are already married then it would be too late." Aiden said sadly.

Lucy shook her head. "I've made up my mind. It doesn't matter if I meet my fated mate now or later. This is my burden to bear. What is one person's happiness next to a peaceful existence between vampires and werewolves?" She gave him a small smile. "Sure, it stings a bit. When I see everyone nding their mates... I guess I am a bit bitter over it. But mom and dad never forced this on me. They have always told me it would be my decision. And while it is it also isn't. How can I choose not to honor the treaty?" She shook her head. "It will be okay Aiden. The vampire king and queen are really nice. And Derek has always been a gentleman with me. It isn't love but I won't be mistreated."

She smirked and looked up at Aiden. "Of course heaven help him if he tries to mistreat me. I'm not exactly a weakling."

"I'd venture to say there are few who can best you. Of course, I am excluded from that. Being the werewolf king and all." Aiden said smugly.

"Prince." Lucy corrected. "You have not been bestowed all of your powers yet. You are still in training for now. And lucky for you dad doesn't want to hand that burden over until you are older."

A black crow took off ying from a nearby branch. He cawed loudly as he apped his wings as he ascended into the sky. The black bird ew in the direction of the setting sun. Its golden-red light almost seemed to engulf the black speck as he disappeared in its light. A suffocating feeling spread in her chest as she thought of how the bird was able to travel so freely. The breeze played with her long hair tossing the strands behind her. The bird had vanished, and the sun continued to slowly move showing how time never stood still.

"Hey Luce." Aiden said quietly as he stood beside her. "I know that you've made your decision. But if that ever changes... don't think you are stuck. You aren't stuck. You have a big support group that is behind you. You know that right?"

"I know."

"Come on Princess. We've got a graduation party to attend." Aiden draped his arm around her shoulder and slowly corralled her back to the house.

Lucy smiled and pushed the negative thoughts from her mind. Tonight, they wouldn't think about the bad. They would have a celebration and enjoy a fun time with family and friends. She would try to enjoy this eeting moment in her life and soak up as much of this that she could. So that she could always hold on to the love and memories deep in her heart.