

The Alpha's Captive Matew by Taylor Caine Chapter 11

CHAPTER 11

Harper

As soon as Aaron's truck rolled up to the ranch, I was studying the various buildings and surrounding fields rolling off into forest and mountains in the near distance, knowing even the smallest detail might make the difference between escaping

or not.

I didn't move until Aaron came around the truck and opened the door for me.

There didn't seem to be much of anyone around as I took in the details.

There were two barns and one smaller mudbrick structure of some sort off to the side. The main ranch house was large and sprawling, like something out of a movie. [WwW.n0re@δrM.cm](#)

Beyond the ranch house was an entire field split up into sections, the biggest vegetable garden I'd ever seen. Off to one side was what looked like an orchard with rows and rows of all different kinds of fruit trees, while opposite that, a small village of modest sized log cabins was set up in neat rows around a kind of town square.

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I didn't get to take in anything else as Aaron tugged me up the stairs to the wide porch, complete with rocking chairs and swing seat that could probably comfortably fit four people.

I hadn't been so terrified, I might have thought this place looked amazing, like something out of an idyllic dream of life

on the land.

Inside the ranch house, Aaron propelled me through to the kitchen. I glimpsed roaring fireplaces, comfy couches strewn with soft blankets and cozy cushions, pictures on walls, a place that looked like, felt like family.

The one thing I'd always mostly been missing.

My grandmother had loved me, but it'd always just been me and her, living in our cramped trailer and making the best of things and wondering what it'd be like to have parents, siblings, an actual home where I learned to ride my bike and played with other kids in the neighborhood. [wwW.N0re@δrM.cm](#)

But that kind of life was never in the cards for me.

Seemed about as impossible as all those princess movies I'd watched where the girl found her prince who rescued her from whatever life had thrown her way and they always lived happily ever after.

Unfortunately, my role in that type of story was always going

to be the villain or the outcast.

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"Sandy," Aaron called out as we reached the double swinging

doors that opened into the huge kitchen.

Inside, there was an older woman standing at the bench, flour

dusting her hands, while a guy and a girl my own age sat by watching, their conversation coming to a halt when we burst

"Aaron, you weren't supposed to be back until later today," the woman-presumably Sandy-said dusting her hands off on

her apron.

"Ran into a complication," Aaron said dismissively.

I glanced at him curiously, forgetting my fear for a moment.

He sounded reserved when talking to this woman. As if he respected her, but also maybe didn't like her.

Sandy started to step forward, but I saw the moment she caught my scent and realized who-or should I say what-I

was.

She side-stepped instead, expression becoming hostile as she put herself between me and the two young people seated at the counter, watching this exchange

"Is that- Is she the half-witch, half-wolf abomination of

Ian Crawford?" Sandy demanded angrily, sounding like she

wanted to set me on fire right on the spot.

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"Yes," Aaron replied impatiently. "Her name is Harper, and I'm

leaving her in your charge."

"What?" Sandy demanded, aghast.

"She's going to pay the Crawford's blood debt," Aaron said, as if he didn't think he should even have to explain that much. "I don't trust her, but I can't watch her twenty-four-hours a day and run the pack. Sandy, I need you to take on this responsibility."

"She's not worth the Crawford's blood debt," Sandy replied, her expression full of loathing.

"I didn't say she'd pay all of it," Aaron said, a rumble of impatience and annoyance coming through in his Alpha voice. "But it'll be a start. I need to get back to Ellisville, I didn't get a chance to buy our monthly supplies. Do whatever you want with her, just make sure she doesn't try to run."

I tried not to react at Aaron's words.

How did he know I was planning to run?

I suppose given the circumstances it wasn't that unlikely.

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Still, even if Aaron knew what I planned and this Sandy woman watched me like Aaron had ordered, they had to sleep

some time.

At some point, they would let their guard down and then I would run like my life depended on it.

Because it did.

I didn't ask what paying the Crawford's blood debt was going to involve-I didn't know anything about packs or their laws or how they doled out justice-and given all the horrible things my biological father had done, Aaron had no reason to tell me. But I could guess it was going to be nothing pleasant.

In fact, it was probably something I wouldn't even survive.

"Fine," Sandy eventually huffed.

"Good," Aaron said with a nod. He finally let my arm go and pushed me forward a step. "I need to head out now. It'll be dark by the time I get home again." [wwW.n0re@δrM.cm](#)

Aaron didn't look at me, just turned on his heel and strode out of the kitchen.

Gone was the man who'd saved me, not once, but twice.

It was like he never existed.

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Sandy marched over and snatched my wrist in a pinching hold, before taking me over to the large stone fireplace crackling next to two stoves-one old-fashioned and one new, modern and expensive looking.

There were eyelets in the stonework of the hearth.

"Beau, go and get some chains from the barn," Sandy said, and the young guy who'd been sitting at the bench nodded before hopping off the stool and exiting through the

backdoor.

"You can't chain me up!" It seemed I'd finally found my voice. I

balked at the idea of being tied down and trapped in place.

Sandy turned to face me, hand streaking out and slapping me

across the cheek before I even realized what was happening.

Tears stung my eyes at the burn left on my face.

"I can do whatever I want to you!" she sneered. "You heard our Alpha. He made you my responsibility, and by god, you will

not make a fool of me!"

Beau returned with the chains a few moments later as the other girl got up from the stool and ambled over like I was a simple curiosity at a side show. She'd been silent this whole

time, watching.

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"She doesn't really live up to the stories, does she?" the girl said, raking a cruel, dismissive gaze over me. "Pathetic, really."

"Make yourself useful, Melody," Beau said, handing the girl a pair of manacles.

"Gladly," she said with relish, stepping forward to snap

them around my wrists as Beau attached the chains to the

eyelets in the wall, while Sandy stood back and watched with

satisfaction.

Once they were done, they stepped back and stood at her side, the three of them looking down on me like I was less than garbage.

"You don't speak unless spoken to," Sandy said in an ice-cold voice. "You will do as I say without question. You will be grateful that our Alpha even allows you to be alive right now. Every breath you take is at his whim, and by extension my permission. But do not mistake me, I will not hesitate to act should you try anything."

Sandy didn't even wait to see if I would agree or not, simply turned her back on me in dismissal and returned to whatever

she was baking at the counter.

I sank down against the hard floor and unforgiving stone of

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the hearth, the manacles so tight, I could feel them pressing and bruising my flesh, already cutting into my skin.

Part of me wanted to give up right then.

Accept my fate and let whatever was going to happen simply

take hold.

Surely death would be easier, a release from the torment of

my cursed hybrid existence.

But some stubborn part of me refused to lay down and die.

And some even more stubborn, stupid part of me wanted to prove to Aaron I wasn't who he thought I was.

That I didn't deserve to pay for the sins of my father.

I'd glimpsed Aaron's protective, caring side.

I knew he wasn't a bad person.

He'd saved me. Cared for me in ways he hadn't needed to... until he'd discovered who I was.

Maybe if I could appeal to that side I knew was buried deep inside him, I could convince him not to hold me or kill me. Not to make me pay this blood debt.

Maybe even to simply let me go.

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While I was chained like this, physically unable to run, it was [WwW.0vELWoRm.CoM](#)

the only plan I could make that seemed like it might have even

a slim chance of working.

No matter how impossible it seemed like it might be to break through his hatred.

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