

The Alpha's Captive Matew by Taylor Caine Chapter 3

CHAPTER 3

Harper

The man with the sky-blue eyes and dark hair was staring at me in brooding silence.

I fidgeted in place, wondering if I'd done something wrong.

He seemed angry.

Maybe angry wasn't the right word, though I didn't know why

I thought I could sense his feelings.

It was just like I somehow had this innate knowledge that told

me he was more unimpressed than actually angry.

Still, it left me feeling wrong-footed, like I was somehow at fault for something I didn't even know about.

"You're a witch," he said, a hint of accusation in his tone as he straightened, unfolding his tall frame from where he'd been sitting on the edge of the bed. "Why were you in a human foster home? Did you run away or something?"

"I'm only half-witch," I replied in a low voice, wondering if I should even voice that truth.

Didn't seem like much point denying it if he could somehow tell.

2/7

But Grandma had always told me not to trust anyone.

The other witches had shunned me because I was half-wolf.

Grandma had said if the wolves knew I existed, they'd want

to kill me for the same reason. But also because of who my

father had been.

"Does Maryanne know about you?" the man asked, brow

creasing in confusion.

"Who is Maryanne?" I asked, reaching down to grip the hem of the T-shirt between my fingers.

I hadn't expected him to buy me new clothes. They were basic

and clean and not fancy in any way. But they were the nicest

clothes anyone had given me in a few years now.

At my question, the man looked even more perplexed.

"Are you hungry?" He raked a glance over me as if he knew the answer just by looking at me. "Let's go get you some food."

especially since I didn't actually know how I was going to look after myself.

The few possessions and pitiful amount of money I'd scrounge together were hidden in Greg's backyard, two hours away in

Silverwater. It was doubtful I was ever going to get them back

again.

Not that any of it had any sentimental value. Anything that

had meant something to me had been lost between moves around various foster homes the past six years—a picture of my mom, a teddy my grandmother had given me, a woven bracelet I'd gotten from the only friend I'd had growing up.

All long gone.

The only thing I had left was a necklace my grandmother had

given me.

For protection, she'd said. Never take it off.

So I hadn't. It was probably the only reason I still had it.

"No offense, but you look like you'd blow over in a stiff breeze," the man said, gaze roving over me again critically. "You'll have to excuse me if I don't quite believe the whole 'I can look after myself thing.'"

I felt my face heating, since he was completely right.

I didn't say anything as the man led me back out to his truck.

Truthfully I was starving.

Greg had let me have some stale bread crusts for dinner last

night and then made me cook him a full breakfast of eggs and

bacon this morning, but I hadn't been allowed to eat any of it

myself.

I would kill for something decent like pancakes or waffles.

I didn't know why I trusted this man who was taller and

broader in the shoulders even than Greg had been.

This man's hands were large with broad palms and his thighs

thickly filled out his jeans. He looked like he could seriously

hurt me if he wanted to. By all rights, I should have been

terrified of someone so clearly powerful, but something told

me he wouldn't harm me.

Or maybe I was just that desperate, I'd lost all sense of

caution.

I was starving, and he'd offered to feed me. He'd saved me

from Greg, listened when I said I didn't want to go to the hospital, and bought me new clothes all

without saying a

thing.

Maybe it would come later.

5/7

Maybe once I was fed and he'd lulled me into a false sense of security, he'd strike.

But this time I was going to be smarter. If I couldn't be strong

or powerful, then I had to be quick with my mind and fast to

get away.

I'd let him feed me, then I'd make my escape.

We drove in silence through the town. The radio drewled

country music between us, and I felt my lids drooping. Healing

myself had taken a bit out of me, and I was already weak from lack of food and constantly living on my guard around Greg.

Witches were able to tap into ancestral magic soaked into the land from the blood and bones of our ancestors. Being only

half-witch, I could access some of it, but it was like a faucet

that was turned to a trickle instead of a gush.

My grandma used to say when I grew up and came into myself, my powers would strengthen. She didn't think being only half-witch should matter.

But I'd heard what some of the other witches had said the few

times we'd ever seen any. That the taint of my werewolf blood would ruin whatever ancestral magic might flow through my

veins.

6/7

So when I used what little I could access to do things like heal myself, it always took a lot out of me.

I roused when the truck pulled into the lot of a diner.

"I don't even know your name," the guy said, glancing at me.

"Harper," I replied automatically, not even thinking about

whether it was a good idea to give him my real name.

"I'm Aaron Holland," he said, holding out a hand expectantly.

I reached up and took it, my smaller palm fitting snugly into his larger one. Instead of shaking it like I'd expected him to, he seemed surprised by the touch, glancing down at our joined

hands.

Maybe it was all the heat, the warmth radiating between our skin and unfurling up the length of my arm.

I snatched my hand back, alarmed, because I'd never felt

anything like that in my life before.

If Aaron thought it was weird, I couldn't tell. He quickly

schooled his features and shoved open the door.

"Come on, let's get some food."

He got out of the truck and headed toward the diner without

waiting for me.

This was it.

If I wanted to run, I could do it. Just disappear and find my

own way.

Something strange was going on. It was hard to believe Aaron was only helping me out of the goodness of his heart.

People just didn't do that.

Not in my experience.

So did I run?

Or did I walk into the diner and trust this handsome stranger

for a little while longer?