

# **Claimed by the Alpha's Love - Love Demands Real Courage Author: Michael Anderson 5**

Claimed by the Alpha's Love

Chapter 5

Lucas's POV:

As I watched Hannah Sullivan fawn over Mia while treating Tori with undisguised disdain, my wolf Duke growled deep within my

consciousness.

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She treats her own daughter like she's worth less than dirt.

I suppressed the urge to intervene further. While Alexander had shown some fairness by disciplining his spoiled daughter Mia, Hannah's

behavior toward Tori made my blood boil.

Still, this wasn't my battle to fight-at least not yet.

"Alpha Lucas," Hannah said with that artificial smile I'd grown accustomed to over the years, "please accept my apologies for this unfortunate family display. Let us move somewhere more comfortable to discuss Ethan and Fiona's mating ceremony arrangements."

Tori seemed to recognize her chance to escape. "I should go to school," she said quickly, gathering her things.

No one protested as she slipped out, closing the door quietly behind her.

The moment it clicked shut, I casually reached for my teacup.

"Your daughter seems a bit too indulged," I remarked, my tone deliberately casual as I took a sip of tea.

Hannah subconsciously assumed I was referring to Tori. "I completely agree, Alpha Lucas," she said with a nod. "That girl needs proper guidance after her time away. I assure you I'll be stricter with her behavior going forward."

My eyes turned glacial as I fixed Hannah with a stare that made her swallow visibly.

“I was referring to Mia,” I corrected, my voice dangerously soft.

Hannah tensed, her spine going rigid. “Well, Mia is just high-spirited and-

“Hannah.” Alexander’s voice cut her off as he placed a warning hand on her arm.

Being a shrewd businessman, Alexander immediately understood my meaning.

“You’re absolutely right, Alpha Lucas,” he said smoothly. “I’ll personally ensure Mia understands the consequences of her actions. And, he added with a pointed glance at Hannah, that all members of our household are treated with appropriate respect.”

When Ethan and Fiona finally arrived, we turned the topic to the mating ceremony. I noticed my nephew’s tense shoulders and the way his smile seemed forced.

The Price family, particularly Hannah, dominated the conversation about the mating ceremony, while Ethan remained noticeably silent.

I’d always considered myself an expert at hiding emotions, but Ethan’s distraction was painfully obvious. This wasn’t the behavior of a man eager to claim his chosen mate.

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I said, starting the engine with more force than necessary. “If you’re going to go through with this mating, at least have the decency to act interested in the arrangements.”

Ethan stared out the window, his reflection in the glass showing a conflicted young man.

“Uncle Lucas, he finally said, voice strained. “I think I’ve made a mistake. This engagement with Fiona-

“Stop. I cut him off before he could finish. “This isn’t a game, Ethan. If you accepted this arrangement, you must see it through to the end. If you didn’t want it, you shouldn’t have agreed in the first place. Backing out midway is not an option.”

“But-

“There are no buts. My tone brooked no argument, though a memory nagged at me.

Richard had mentioned Ethan’s former girlfriend-someone who’d been imprisoned for some offense. Ethan had actually begged for my help back then, but I’d refused to get involved. Now it made sense why Richard was pushing this mating ceremony so urgently; he must have anticipated Ethan’s hesitation once his ex was released.

I studied my nephew’s dejected profile, genuinely puzzled. What was it about this woman that kept Ethan so fixated? She’d been to prison, for Moon’s sake. How could any woman with such a history be worth this level of devotion?

“Whatever-or whoever-you’re thinking about, let it go,” I added coldly.

Ethan fell silent, his shoulders slumping in resignation. The rest of the drive proceeded in strained silence.

Back at the Grayson estate-the sprawling ancestral home of the Gray Moon Pack that served as both residence and pack headquarters. Ethan returned to his room quickly with a gloomy look.

I had just stepped out of my car when Morgan Baker, our housekeeper’s daughter, came bounding up the driveway, fresh from school.

“Good afternoon, Alpha Lucas!” she called out with her usual enthusiasm, her eyes lighting up at the sight of me.

I normally would have nodded and continued on my way, but something caught my attention-her school uniform. The navy blazer with silver trim looked familiar, identical to what Tori had been wearing this morning I paused, taking a second look.

‘Morgan,’ I said, stopping in my tracks.

She fraze mid-step, eyes widening in surprise. For a moment, she glanced behind her as if confirming I was actually addressing her and not someone else.

“Y-yes, Alpha Lucas? she stammered, clearly flustered by the unexpected attention.

“That uniform-which school is it from?”

Moonridge High, Alpha. Her expression was confused.

Did your school recently admit a new student? Tori Sullivan?”

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Her eyes narrowed slightly with curiosity. "Do you know her, Alpha Lucas

I didn't answer her question, my expression giving nothing away. Instead asked, "How is she adjusting to school?"

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"Well," Morgan began, seemingly pleased to share information, she keeps to herself mostly. Doesn't talk much to anyone. She shifted her backpack to her other shoulder. "I also noticed she got a job at Moonlight Shadow Café after school. Must be tough, balancing school and

work."

I processed this information silently, my brow furrowing before I could control it. Why would a high school student living with the Price family need to work? Their estate might not rival Grayson territory, but it was substantial enough that a teenage girl shouldn't need after-school

employment just to get by.

Hannah's cold behavior toward Tori flashed through my mind-the dismissive tone, the thinly veiled contempt. If she treated her daughter that poorly in front of an Alpha guest, how did she behave when no one important was watching?

After a moment's hesitation, I said, "I'd like you to look after her at school

"Look after her?" Morgan repeated, surprised.

"Make sure she settles in well," I clarified, my tone carefully neutral. "Help her if she needs it."

Morgan's eyes sparked with interest and a dozen unasked questions, but she knew better than to press an Alpha for explanations. Instead, she nodded eagerly.

"Of course! I'd be happy to help her," she said, practically bouncing on her toes with excitement.

"Morgan," I cautioned, "this stays between us. She cannot know I asked you to do this."

She nodded solemnly, though her eyes still sparkled. “Absolutely, Alpha. Complete secrecy.”

“And I expect updates,” I added, my voice lowering. “Regular ones. How she’s adjusting, who she’s speaking with, and any problems she

encounters.

“I won’t let you down,” she added earnestly, straightening her posture as though I’d entrusted her with a mission of grave importance.

“Good,” I said with a curt nod, already turning toward the main house.

I pulled out my phone and texted Matthew Howard: Drinks tonight. Moonlight District. 8 PM.

Matthew was the pack’s most talented healer, known for his exceptional healing abilities and his equally exceptional ability to extract information while appearing to engage in casual conversation.

He’d been my friend since childhood, one of the few people I actually trusted with personal matters.

His reply came almost immediately: “Well, this is rare. Is Lucas Grayson actually initiating drinks? \*

I ignored his joke. Just be there.

The bar offered a strategic view of the lower level of Howling Plaza. I'd selected our table carefully-positioned by the window where I could observe Tori without being immediately noticeable.

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She moved with graceful efficiency between tables, balancing trays while deflecting unwanted attention from some of the patrons. Even dressed

in the café's standard uniform, she carried herself with quiet dignity.

"Lucas? Are you even listening to me?"

Matthew Howard waved his hand in front of my face, breaking my concentration. I'd completely tuned him out.

"What?" I asked, not bothering to hide my irritation.

Matthew followed my gaze down to the café below, his eyebrows shooting up when he spotted what-or rather who-had captured my attention.

"Well, well," he said, a knowing smirk spreading across his face. "What has the infamous 'Frost King' so captivated? A little Omega waitress?"

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