

## Chapter 1

Lyka's POV

I can smell a familiar scent of blood around me. Moonlight rays pierced my body, and howling echoed in my ears, like a death song sung just for me. My body felt weak, and my feet were numb as I lay on the dry leaves.

"What happened? Where am I?"

As I tried to lift the heavy lids of my eyes, I saw the elder looking at me. Their eyes were fierce as if slicing my body into pieces.

"I can't believe you did this to the people who adopted you, Lyka!" the old man said, without giving me a clue.

My head was full of questions as I tried to recall the faded memories, but they still eluded me.

Soon, a man stepped forward and walked towards me. His eyes were blank, and I saw no mercy. He was Sage, my mate. The only person I trust and love. But I don't know why he claimed me.

"Sage, this killer will be your luna? She might be a threat to our pack. If she could kill her own parents, she might kill all of us," said the other elder.

Sage didn't respond. He fixed his gaze at my naked body as I tried to cover my exposed skin. Indeed, I could smell the blood of my family, but I was still confused about what was happening around me.

"Don't you remember anything, Lyka?" Sage asked me.

I slowly moved my feet and turned my head to look around. My eyes widened as I saw my mother's body bathed in her own blood. My father's neck was sliced, and I could see his flesh. Tears started streaming down my face as I saw the blood around me. I looked at my hands and they were covered in blood. I touched my lips and the red stain was impossible to remove.

"What did I do?"

I looked back at Sage and our eyes met. He had never looked at me like this before. I could feel his disappointment, his attempt to communicate with me through his eyes, but my thoughts were filled with fear and confusion. He sighed and began to walk. I couldn't control the trembling of my body as he approached me, kneeling before me and removing his black coat with a feathered collar. My eyes widened as he covered my body with it, then held me in his arms and lifted me.

Everything seemed like a dream. Sage has always been like this to me but now, this feels different.

"Clean this blood. I don't want to see any stain left behind," he commanded.

Their thoughts were puzzled, but no one dared to ask. They bowed their heads and did as Sage wanted.

As Sage started to walk, my body gradually calmed. I leaned my head against his chest and closed my eyes, as my tears escaped from it.

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The dark, cold room was filled with silence. I sat on the edge of the bed while Sage cleaned my wound. His eyes were focused on what he was doing, and I was too timid to open my mouth and break the deafening silence.

"Speak now, if you intend to," Sage's voice echoed around the room as he started talking.

A strangled gulp escaped my lips when I heard his voice.

"S-Sage... why did you save me from being exiled?"

"Exiled? Why do you think you would be exiled?"

His words were calm and his hands were warm. Our eyes met as he stopped what he was doing. I saw a small curve of a smile on his lips.

"W-Why are you smiling?"

My shoulders jumped when I felt his large hands on my head.

"I'm proud of you. You finally released the wolf thing inside your body, Lyka. Even though you don't remember anything, it's evident that you've become a strong wolf."

"B-But I killed my own family?"

"We both know they weren't your real parents."

"T-Then is that okay to leave it like that?"

"Do we have a choice? Can you put them back to life?"

A pang of pain shot through my chest at those words. He was right, there's nothing I could do. Those people weren't my real parents and I had no idea where they were, but I still treated them as family.

"Take a rest, you need it."

Sage stood up and lifted the medicine box. I didn't know how to respond to his kindness and it was too late when he stepped out of the room. My body started to feel heavy and I decided to lay down in the bed and finally close my eyes.

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The sun was up, and I could smell the clean scent of the bedsheets. I slowly opened my eyes, realizing I was still in Sage's room. Although he was my mate, we never slept in the same bed.

They said that when the time comes and you find your mate, you will feel a warm sensation in your body, and his scent will be different one. But to be honest, I never felt anything like that for Sage, or maybe it was just a late reaction of my body.

I got up and stepped onto the cold bedroom floor, then walked out to find him. As I approached his study door, I accidentally overheard the elders talking inside. I didn't intend to eavesdrop, but something compelled me to.

"What are you planning to do with that woman, Sage?" asked Jacob, the first elder.

"Nothing. She will stay by my side."

"Sage!"

My shoulder jumped as the second elder slammed his hands on the table.

"Did you forget about the prophecy?"

My brows furrowed. "Prophecy?"

"Lower your voice! You don't want Lyka to hear you, right?" Sage hissed, glaring at the old man.

"But, Sage! You are the leader and you have a chance to prevent what is going to happen. Are you willing to sacrifice our pack to protect your mate?"

Sage clenched his hands, his anger palpable. Confusion washed over me and I had no idea what they were talking about. I was just a young woman accepted by Sage, and now I was a threat?

"Silence!" Sage shouted. "No one will lay a finger on her! She's mine, and that's final!"

My heart soared at his words. He was willing to sacrifice his pack to protect me. I covered my mouth to stifle a sob, then ran from the mansion.

My feet moved, unaware of where I was going. All I knew was that I needed to get away from the people who saw me as an enemy.

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As I lifted my head, I realized I'd arrived at the building where I worked—Sage's building.

I let out a sigh of relief. At least I'd changed clothes earlier and looked presentable. For now, I wanted to forget what had happened.

I entered the building but the moment I stepped inside, a hush fell over the place and people stared at me.

"What's she doing here?"

"Is that the woman who killed her own family?"

"The courage to come here?"

"She's a big threat."

Whispers surrounded me. I lowered my head, ignoring the murmurs and stepped into the elevator. But every time people saw me, they quickly turned away.

"What a smelly bitch! She smells like the blood of her own relatives," a woman riding with me sneered.

As the doors opened, she covered her nose, retrieved perfume from her bag, and sprayed it in my face.

"Get away, you freak!" she said, stepping out of the elevator.

Tears welled up in my eyes. What was happening? Why was this happening to me?

Those questions raced through my mind. But just as the elevator doors were about to close, my eyes widened as someone grabbed my arm and pulled me close.

"S-Sage?" I whispered, tears streaming down my face.

He hugged me tightly and then kissed my forehead.

"Don't be scared. I'm here," he whispered.

My heart calmed, warmed by his love. As long as Sage was by my side, I would never be afraid.

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As usual, I helped Sage as his secretary, pushing the unsettling worries from my mind. Soon, the day ended and the sun is starting to set.

As we walked in the hallway of the building, the employees' eyes secretly lingered on me, though none dared to meet my gaze directly because I was with the man who owned everything in this place.

We got into a luxurious vehicle when we reached the drop-off area. My heart skipped a beat when I felt Sage's warm hand take mine. I looked at him with a furrowed brow and after a moment, he glanced at me and offered a small smile.

"Stop overthinking. Everything will be alright," he said calmly.

I remembered what I'd overheard that morning and hesitated before asking. Yet, the question slipped out.

"What about the prophecy?"

Sage's eyes widened at my words. I saw him swallow hard, clearly unsure how to answer.

"W-Where did you hear that?" he stammered, his hesitation was obvious and by then, I knew they were hiding something.

"I-I heard it somewhere," I replied, avoiding his gaze.

But Sage caught my shoulder and I was surprised by the strength of his embrace. He stroked my hair and I felt his gentleness.

"Don't overthink. As long as I'm here, you'll never get hurt."

His words were like a warm re-igniting my heart. I smiled, unprepared for his actions.

This time I felt cherished and loved by him and I am not complaining.

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That night, under the cloak of darkness, I had no idea things were about to change.

I lay in my bed, unable to move. My eyes remained closed as my head tossed and turned. My mind started to wander into a terrifying dream.

"Run!"

I heard a cold male voice, commanding me to get away... but where could I go?

My body floated in dark water. My feet moved but I didn't sink; I continued walking in a place that seemed to have no end.

After a while, I saw a glowing man figure standing in the distance.

"W-Who are you?" I asked him.

His head rose as he heard my voice echo in the dark cold surroundings.

A current of electricity began to crawl across my skin as he slowly turned to face me. I froze, unable to move as our eyes met.

His crimson eyes seemed to slowly draw out my soul. My feet remained rooted to the spot as the stranger's eyes burned with an intense red.

Soon after, in the blink of an eye, my eyes widened as I saw him standing inches away from me.

His hands moved slowly, touching my face, and squeezing my cheeks. His skin was as cold as ice and then I realized what he was.

"A vampire," I whispered, trembling.

He smirked at the word, then spoke.

"I finally found you."