

Chapter One

Chelsea's Choice

Chelsea's head was spinning. Finding out that her past was a lie was bad enough, but finding out that she had been kidnapped and raised by strangers who were associated with the evil sect and that she was no longer a human woman plain and simple was more than she could handle. Now she was only half-human. On top of all that, she was walking into the unknown to some underworld with a man that was the prince of an evil sorcerer sect, and also her father, who called himself Mike. And that makes her their princess. It was all so overwhelming. Concentrating on all the details that Sarah just told her that evening caused her mind to go into overload. Disbelief and confusion overpowered her every thought, and now she found herself walking into a place where she was expected to fight some battle.

She remembered back just nights earlier when she often looked out of the window from the answering service that faced the very same graveyard; it was turning into a living nightmare. Chelsea thought back once again how Sarah read her the family's secret red journal. At that time she had no idea how it would impact the rest of her existence.

Now here she was, getting ready to bid farewell to her newly-found human family. Everything was happening too fast. As she started walking, she couldn't help reflecting on earlier events of the night.

The last few weeks had been full of shocking revelations and horrifying experiences for her. She kept reliving the events of it

all. Her mind replayed the days leading up to that moment and she couldn't help watching the interactions between her family while they anticipated and dreaded her choice to go into the portal. As Chelsea thought back, she remembered what Sarah read and what happened that lead her to the choice. She started remembering every word that Sarah said during the events that took place that fateful night, and those words played over and over in Chelsea's head.

She remembered the conversation: "Wait, I understand what Mike meant when he said that the sorceress disguised herself as him so that she could try to take your son, Scott. But what do I have to do with all this? Why didn't this all just end at the end of your journal?"

Sarah started her explanation. "Chelsea, there is much more. What's not in the journal is that Mike and Jessica had a baby. We received a letter that Jessica had written before she was committed and after the birth, along with the details of what ultimately took her over the edge of reality. We did not see Jessica for quite awhile after the incident, so we had no idea until much later about what happened."

When she said that, Jessica started crying, whispering, "Baby, baby, all gone..."

Sarah said, "Please know that when you drank the potion at my house, I knew the answer and here it is." She took Chelsea's hand, placed it upon Jessica's, and said very calmly, "Chelsea, you are Jessica and Mike's baby." After a brief pause, she continued with the rest, "You are half human. I spoke to Shania when you went missing. That is how she knew about you when you met her. It is because you are their princess that your father, who is a prince, was not killed when he betrayed them and refused to hurt the family he had grown to love. Because you and he are connected by blood, they kept him locked away,

and evidently with your presence here, they allowed him to go free, possibly to help them reach you. That is what I figure.

“Chelsea just the fact that you are their princess puts a lot of responsibility in your hands. They will not harm you either, or your mother for that matter. The reason that we have remained safe is because of your existence, due to the fact that we are also of your blood. But they need your essence. The human part will make them more powerful.”

Then Chelsea asked softly, “Jessica, YOU are my mother?” Jessica had her hand over her mouth, and her eyes were clear again, as if she had been slapped awake. She grabbed Chelsea and hugged her. She kept saying, “My baby, my precious baby. You have come back to me. I thought I had lost you forever.” She was crying tears of joy.

Sarah explained, “Chelsea, they took you from her breast while she was nursing you. They snuck in, and you were gone. After that, your mother tried to end her life. We received a phone call and were persuaded to place her into the private sanitarium for her own good. She went into a catatonic state, and we couldn’t reach her.”

“Whoa!” Chelsea said as she stood up and stepped away from them both. The thought that she had possibly been raised by people who were not her real parents was more than she could understand. “Wait. What are you talking about? I have parents.”

“Yes, you do, but they are not really yours. We believe that the people you grew up with are part of a sect of humans who worship the evil master,” Sarah explained.

“They were at my company’s Halloween party, along with my coworkers. I found out that they are part of the same sect. They obviously met here in the building that night. They planned to take me then. I was protected by Shania, her

nymphs, and the amulet," Chelsea said. Everything was finally falling into place. "But I still thought they were my real parents at that time." Chelsea was so confused and overwhelmed.

"Ours is your true blood line, along with Mike's," Sarah said firmly, making it quite clear to Chelsea. "Tonight on All Hallows Eve, they must take you as they tried to do to Sonny, James' father, when Liz and I released his soul. So for that reason, they are not too happy with me, to say the least. But like I said, because you are part of me as well as them, they had to back off. That is the reason why they didn't continue to pursue us any longer to get you. Because they thought they had you. Their goal is to become stronger and much, more powerful. Their missing link is you! The sorcerers want to wreck havoc on our world as well as any other worlds that might exist within the universe."

"Shania's nymphs helped me get away many times," Chelsea said. "The nymphs forced the evil to back off."

"My daughter Cassie told me a few weeks ago that something surprising was going to happen in our lives," Sarah said. "I thought she meant trying to win a lottery or something innocent like that, and it didn't seem like she was talking about a terrible thing, so I wasn't concerned. Now we know it was you coming back into our family."

"As soon as we knew of your birth, Chelsea, we felt you were special. We knew that Mike was a sorcerer, and that Jessica's baby had to be half human. We had hoped that the rest of the sect wouldn't try to bother us. We suspected early on that you had powers." Sarah smiled at Chelsea warmly.

"Ok, let me get this straight," Chelsea said in a frustrated voice. She felt as if her world had been turned upside down. "Sarah and Jessica are my real family, I am only half human" The reality of it fell on her like a ton of bricks. "My parents are

not really my parents, the ones who raised me. Jessica and Mike are my parents. My father is a prince, son of the master, then that makes me a princess of the evil sect!" She shook her head and stared at Sarah. "I was kidnapped! Now how am I supposed to deal with all this?" She asked tearing up.

Chelsea started to cry and instinctively reached into her blouse to take out her amulet. "Oh no! It isn't around my neck. Shania knew me and that's why she had to protect me. She knew everything from the beginning and instructed me to find you." But was that part even real, she wondered.

Chelsea was spellbound and in shock. She walked over to Jessica, who was still crying. She no longer looked as if she was still in her shell. Chelsea bent down slowly, looked into Jessica's eyes, and hugged her softly at first. Then the embrace became intense. They both cried and rocked back and forth like a cradle, while Jessica repeated, "My baby, oh my sweet baby, I have you back."

Chelsea now thought that she understood everything about her life had been a lie. For the first time Chelsea knew how it felt to be nurtured and loved. Suddenly, she felt full of anger and rage. She was furious that they stole her youth and devastated her mother. How dare they!

"It does explain why my parents were so distant emotionally, never allowing me to leave the house, home schooling me for many years, and never celebrating my birthday," she said. "That's why I have fears of closed-in spaces and many other strange phobias. It's all their fault."

"I am so sorry that you have gone through so much," Sarah said. "We did everything we could to prevent it. We looked for you as soon as we found out about you, but to no avail. How did you get away from them?" Sarah asked.

"I never felt connected to them," Chelsea explained. "When I was sixteen, I just left during the night. If the sorcerers are really coming tonight to take me away for good, I will be ready to fight them. All my life, my so-called parents played me like a fiddle for the sorcerers to take me. No way! This is truly going to be a fight!" Chelsea fumed.

Sarah reached over affectionately and pulled Jessica and Chelsea into her arms; they all hugged. At that moment, the chanting grew louder and louder; it seemed to be coming from every room surrounding them. Chelsea ran over to the wall of monitors in the office and flung the doors open. The vision of what they saw was frightening beyond belief. All the security monitors were full of sorcerers. They were on every single floor of the building, and they kept demanding that Chelsea join them.

Sarah suddenly sprang into action, giving instructions to Chelsea and Jessica. "We must form a sacred circle of salt and fresh flowers around us," she said. "The flowers represent the earth and the salt, air. We will use a red candle for fire to keep them away. They cannot penetrate the circle within a circle. Where we start, we do not end. We must call for the power we have to walk around the circle counter clockwise and must ask the spirits to lend us their power. It will protect us from the Evil entities. This is one of many things that Shania taught me years ago." Sarah explained.

Sarah looked around for flowers. There were some on one of the desks in the office; strangely enough, there was also a small red candle next to a black one on Debra's desk. Chelsea started sprinkling the salt that she found in the company lunch room in a circle. Then they grabbed onto each other's hands and held tight. Sarah explained that if anyone decided to let go, it could cause negative energy to overpower them. They had to remain

positive and strong. They stood completely still. No one moved a muscle, not even a startled blink. Love and blood could not be parted as long as they stayed linked. Sarah started chanting, "I declare thee a safe haven, the circle of light protect us, Lord, with all your might, earth, water, air, and fire." She kept repeating these words in a steady, calm voice.

As the shadows approached, walking through the closed door, they began chanting as well. It had begun. Sarah, Jessica, and Chelsea held each other's hands. Sarah reminded them that just like when she first helped Sonny, they were not supposed to let go. A huge bang made them all jump. Something slammed into the door, and the sound echoed through the hallway.

They slowly stood up and looked towards the graveyard, but didn't let go. Their hands remained clutched together. They saw many shadows in black with red glowing eyes walking out of the graveyard towards the office building.

"Oh no! Here they come. Now what?" yelled Chelsea nervously. "We're surrounded!"

"Just stay with us, Chelsea," Sarah replied.

The voices chanted, "We are of the lunar sect. We coven, we start with the power of moon; we shall rise. This is our will, so it shall be. The moon is full. It is getting closer to midnight; the time is near."

The moon was actually so bright that it lit up the room. All of the supplies and computers in the room were being tossed around, as if by a wind, and the sounds became more intense. The office became full of petrified screams. Chelsea's pulse was throbbing at rapid speed. Her thoughts were reeling; she didn't know exactly how much time they had left before midnight. They needed to find a way to escape the violence of the sorcerers that would soon engulf them.

The life-threatening evil that was approaching began chanting louder and was becoming angrier by the minute. The sorcerers moved in closer and closer. They were zeroing in on Chelsea. The hideous presence of the impending sorcerer's wrath, along with the catastrophic events that they were contemplating, put Jessica back into a shocked, traumatic state. Chelsea could tell from the dazed look on her face. She started ringing her hands, in front of her.

Sarah yelled, "Our circle is unopened and remains unbroken! I now call the spirits of earth, moon, and stars. I call all the elements of life's goodness. All spirits of the past hear my plea!"

After a few moments, Chelsea noticed a glow appearing. They felt compelled to place their hands over their eyes because it was so bright, but they didn't loosen their grip. After a few seconds they slowly opened their eyes and focused on the figure in front of them. It was a male angel in white with enormous wings. They were open, and so beautiful.

He spoke. "Sarah, your love of family has saved one of ours once more. I must not stay long. Hold tight and remain until midnight."

He vanished. Chelsea's mouth was open with surprise. She looked at Sarah, unable to utter a single syllable, and Sarah just said, "Yes, my dear, that was Sonny."

Chelsea knew she had finally seen the man in the painting that she shared many one-sided conversations with. That thought brought a momentary smile to her lips, but not for long.

The screaming continued, getting louder and closer by the second. It seemed as if their numbers kept multiplying. More sorcerers kept arriving in droves, all taunting and chanting and getting closer to their circle. They moved in on Chelsea, but the others kept holding tight. A sorcerer reached out and tried to

part her from the others, but Chelsea refused. She wished that she still had the amulet. She briefly looked at the floor but there was no sign of it, she thought that maybe it fell off her neck. They all backed away, which gave them time to tighten their grip.

One of the sorcerers started chanting louder and proceeded towards Chelsea. A bony hand reached out for her. It grabbed at her arm, and its touch felt clammy and cold like death.

At that moment, they heard fluttering and rustling sounds. For a few moments, all they could see was a ray of beautiful colors that filled the room. A figure began to materialize right in front of their eyes. To Sarah's relief, it was Shania!

Shania turned to the sorcerers and yelled as she stretched out her arms with her palms facing them. "Back off!"

They did as she said and vanished out of the office. Then she turned to the three women. "Chelsea, Sarah and Jessica, listen to me closely! They are tapping into Chelsea's power just by touching her arm. They are trying to send negative energy into your souls, Chelsea. Quickly! Send the emotions and feelings of love into their subconscious minds. It is very important; please hear what I am telling you. They are determined to destroy all of humanity. The conscious mind is logical and rational. You must tap into it and channel your total energy and concentration now, or the unthinkable could occur. I was there for Sarah, and I am here for you, Chelsea. We all have our destinies and our own prophecies. I must call on the spirit of fire, and we must repeat the past. The flames of fire must whirl through the air as a spirit. We cannot allow the portal to open the rest of the way. We have to perform a ritual and burn the whole journal and the feather dust. Do it now! We must also perform a counter spell and banish the evil with fire."

Shania started chanting, "Spirits of fire, come to me." She placed smoldering incense all around the office, on the desks between the computers and the on the floor. She then lit the red candle and placed it on the closest desk.

Shania said, "It is nearing midnight. If you do not succeed, they will take all of you and will have access to your loved ones."

Shania took both halves of the journal and the box of feather dust and placed the items on the table. Shania's eyes turned red and she reached forward and touched them. Flames appeared from her hands. The sorcerers backed off further, but not willingly. They approached once again, trying to reach the journals and dust, which caused the candle to fall over onto the curtain that hung over the huge windows.

It caught fire quickly, and the flames became exceedingly hot. They lapped at their faces. The building was catching on fire along with the items.

"Oh no!" Chelsea screamed. "We're trapped. How will we ever get out of here alive?" The flames were engulfing them. There was no escape.

Just then, Shania stepped forward and quickly opened her wings. With that motion, all the nymphs appeared. They surrounded Chelsea and the others, protecting them from the flames and intense heat. Shania signaled to Chelsea to break the circle. It was safe now to do so. She then motioned for Chelsea to touch the window. "Use your powers," she said. "There isn't much time."

Chelsea was shocked. Her powers? She had no idea how to use them; an hour ago, she didn't even know she had powers. She looked at the windows. They were thick glass panes. How was she supposed to break the window open? The flames were

getting closer to them. Jessica was white with fear and Sarah was starting to cough.

“Now, Chelsea,” Shania yelled. “Now!”

Chelsea, shaking from fear, carefully laid both hands on the large windows, and they blew outwards. The glass fell all the way to the ground below and shattered.

Shania smiled and picked up Chelsea and the nymphs took Sarah and Jessica straight out of the window of the burning building. They were placed down safely and gently in front of the graveyard.

After the shock of what just took place, they just stood there watching the fire and holding each other. There were tears and cheers.

The screeching and threatening chants became louder and louder. Suddenly the sorcerer showed himself to them. It stood in the foggy graveyard and simply glared in their direction. Its eyes glowed bright red. After a moment its eyes started to glow much brighter like a crimson red. Shania was not a bit fearful. She just put her palm outwards and used a fireball, to show him that she was more than capable, to protect them.

The sorcerer put her hands by his sides. He muttered something and turned his back to them. He vanished into the misty, fog. Suddenly the threatening sounds stopped. All that was left was the crackling fire from the burning building and the sounds of sirens from the fire trucks. Crowds were starting to form. Chelsea and the others moved out of sight into the darkness of the graveyard.

Sarah walked over to Shania and thanked her again for being there for them and gently touched her wings, which Shania had partially closed.

“I didn’t know you had wings,” Sarah said.

Shania simply replied, “There was no need before.”

“No, I suppose there wasn't,” Sarah said. “But I'm sure glad you had them now. Gee, I wish Liz could have been here to see this. I will be phoning her ... On second thought, maybe it would be for the best if she didn't find out anything about tonight, except, that we finally found Chelsea. She knew about her existence as we did. She never could handle all of this mysterious stuff.”

Shania gave her a smile and said, “Give her my best.”

Jessica and Chelsea held each other. But what happens now? Chelsea wondered. I am only half human; where does that leave me? There were still many unanswered questions.

She glanced over Jessica's shoulder towards the darkest part of the graveyard. Once again, there stood a tall shadowy figure watching them. It appeared to be Mike, Jessica and Mike knew that their love story would never truly end. Even though it would be impossible for them to be together, love is everlasting, after all. They did share a child, a bond that can never be broken.

Jessica might never be normal again, but at least she had made peace with herself and her past. Maybe now she could work towards having a happy future with their daughter. Unless...

Mike walked over to Chelsea. He whispered in her ear, “You have a choice, my child. You can go through the portal into the underworld to join those of us who fight this battle everyday, or you can stay here on earth with your mother and never know what will happen next.” He leaned closer still. “Chelsea, they will never let you go. Unless we can stop them, your life and your loved ones may never be free and safe.”

Chelsea understood more now about her identity and she knew what her responsibilities were, but what should she do? If

she left Jessica now, how would she handle it? After all, they had just found each other.

She turned to Jessica looking for answers. Sarah walked over and they hugged. Chelsea knew she had to make the choice. She knew her blood was strong, and she had to help her father fight the evil that had banished him. She knew in her heart that she didn't really have much of a choice. She had found her way and the voice of her destiny. Chelsea decided to go with her father.

Chelsea moved away from Jessica as she did, she thought that she felt something fall, but when she looked down she didn't see anything so she continued. "Mother," she said. The word still felt strange to say aloud. "I am so proud to be your daughter and extremely happy to have all the answers about my life at last. I am lucky to be a part of such a loving, devoted family."

"My baby," Jessica said, stroking Chelsea's hair. "I always knew you would come back to me."

"But I am also part of the other world," Chelsea continued. Jessica's eyes became darker, and she looked slightly frightened. Chelsea hated doing this to her, but she knew that there was no other way. "I have a responsibility to this part of me as well. I can follow my father and help him defeat the evil sorceress, once and for all. This is the only way we can all be truly happy and safe."

"But –" Jessica began to protest.

Chelsea grabbed her mother's hand. "My journey is just beginning. But I promise that someday I will return."

Jessica bit her lip to hold back her tears. "I know, baby. I know," she whispered as she held Chelsea tight. "I'll be here waiting for you."

Chelsea pulled herself out of her mother's embrace and blinked hard, fighting back tears.

Mike walked over to Chelsea and put out his hand. "You've made the right decision," he said. "Don't worry. You'll remain safe with me, and you will be back here to see your mother and Sarah again."

Chelsea took his hand and together they walked further into the graveyard. She gave one last glance back over her shoulder and mouthed, "I love you," to Jessica. She then walked toward the portal with her father.

Now Chelsea and Mike were walking through the dense fog into an unknown world. With each and every step, she hesitated. She kept re-thinking her decision to go into the underworld with this sorcerer. Her logical mind could not get a hold of the whole concept, even though he did claim to be her father and Shania seemed to back him up. Chelsea couldn't help questioning the awful tightness in her stomach that was causing her to feel as if she could hardly catch her breath. Usually she listened to her inner feelings when things sometimes didn't seem quite right, but for some reason not this time. She was being drawn in by a force stronger than her own instincts. Chelsea seemed to be incapable of backing out and unable to trust her judgment.

They proceeded walking until they came upon a glowing gravestone. Chelsea hesitated once again. Something was trying to stop her. She felt her conscious and subconscious mind becoming confused. She felt dizzy; it was a battle of her wits.

Millions of thoughts raced through her head. Was this all just a bad dream? Was she really walking towards a portal to a place called the underworld with a man she just met? Chelsea

was definitely not sure whether or not she should join him in the evil battle.

She was having higher levels of doubt the closer that they got to the portal. Her heart started racing, Once again her breath was somewhat restricted. She started slowing down. She took smaller steps as she pondered her feelings. Her mind was making all kinds of mental excuses to tell Mike that she was not going, such as I can't leave my mother, I just found her. Or I don't feel good, maybe another day, but she had nothing. There were no excuses; she was doomed to continue with him.

Chelsea slowed down almost to a complete stop at one point, but her father's grasp grew firmer and he pulled her faster. His grasp was beginning to hurt. She said "Uh, you are hurting me, please slow down." He continued looking straight ahead while picking up his pace. He never even glanced in her direction as she winced in pain. While he was continuing to squeeze her hand, he was sort of dragging her. Why was he is such a rush? This thought alarmed her.

Chelsea did not feel comfortable at all now. She gazed back at her family one last time as if to ask for advice. She saw her mother waving her arms around and saying something, but they were too far away to hear her. She was yelling something, but Chelsea could not make it out. Because she wasn't able to read lips all she knew for sure was that Jessica was definitely trying to communicate with her. She hesitated and then stopped briefly, pulling her hand and her father's. She wanted to try to decipher what Jessica was trying to tell her.

Before she could figure it out, her father's grasp tightened once again and gave her hand a jerk that made her pick up speed again. She became very leery and extremely scared at his behavior. Being the princess of the sorcerer's evil sect did not seem to make him listen to her. Once again, all the knowledge

that was given to her by Shania and Sarah made her realize the harsh reality of her choice. She felt that he should have at least treated her a little more gently. Then she remembered that she has hidden powers. Well, she thought, where are they when I need them?

She protested again. "Hey you are really hurting me stop now!" Her hand got a little hot as she got angry. When she realized this, she tested them. She simply calmed down, and the heat subsided. Hmmm she thought. Maybe I can use them sooner than I think.

Chelsea's thoughts were getting away from her, and she soon realized that they had walked into complete darkness. She found herself looking around, trying to make out the shadows through the mist. It was so cold, dreary, and she picked up a musty putrid smell that was burning her nostrils and throat. It was extremely dirty, and all that she could make out was from some dimly lit circles of light that came from the streetlights where she saw Jessica and the others standing.