

Luca's Inferno by Karima Sa'ad Usman Chapter 1

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Chapter 1

Thank you for daring to read this book.

I hope to communicate with my dear readers in the comment section.

I am Dedicating the work to my kind and steadfast Editor, Rosa, for keeping me on my toes, LOL, and my awesome readers, that have read most of my books and left tons of comments making the writing journey encouraging and fun. I hope to go on another adventure with you guys on this one.

I hope you enjoy the story and the adventure it will bring. xxx

Emma.

“Don't forget about me, Emma,” Declan told me, and I woke up from my sleep again, panting. I had dreamt about Declan for three years. I kept a journal and wondered about the tricks my mind was playing. Was it real or a figment of my imagination?

My real life was trash. Being from a low family in a pack was difficult because I had to be submissive every time. It was in my nature, and I hated it. Most of the time, I'd walk away from problems to avoid being rude or offensive. It wasn't easy, but that was the card life dealt me. I had four loving brothers, a depressed mother and a father with a gambling problem. They all showed their love the best way they could, and I never asked for too much. Asking for too much would make me disappointed.

Being a pretty woman, the eldest son of the beta family of our pack, Tomas Jefferson, took a liking to me. We had been dating for four years. I was hoping he would pop the questions soon, but I wasn't going to hold my breath for it. A lot was in play where our relationship was concerned, and people often said he could do better. Tomas always shut them up by proving his undying love. I had often been tempted to compare him to mysterious Declan, but I knew that would be wrong. The man in my dreams was very unrealistic.

Other than Heather, my best friend, I had not discussed Declan with anyone, and I doubted I ever would. Living in fantasy was borderline behaviour, and I didn't want anyone to call me out on it.

I managed to get up, and it was a beautiful morning as usual. I reached for my phone to try Tomas's line. I had been unable to reach him for two weeks, and now I was worried. What was he doing, and why was he avoiding me? The worst part was Heather said she had seen him around. Being from a low family herself, she did not dare to ask him why he was making himself scarce. I did not dare go to the beta's house uninvited; I might be punished for it. Tomas has to take me there or invite me. My pack was that fucked up, and they took the hierarchy breed thing too damn seriously. If it weren't for that, I would have gone to his house to ask him what his deal was.

I dialled his number with no expectations, and to my surprise, he answered. I did not know how to feel about it.

"Tomas," I managed, and he answered me with his smooth, calm voice.

"Emma, are you alright?" he asked, and I sighed, relieved at his tone.

"Two weeks, Tomas. Why?" I asked him, and he sighed quietly.

"I will come and see you as soon as I can, Emma," he said, and before I could say anything else, he hung up. Before he hung up, I heard his friend's voice in the background, asking him to hurry. I wondered what they were up to. I could never know because I wasn't in that circle.

I managed to get off bed to get ready for the day. I was still job hunting and had an interview lined up for the afternoon. While in the shower, I thought of Tomas's behaviour. It was unfair. No matter how busy he was, he had no right to treat me the way he had in these two weeks.

Six months ago, things had changed between us, but I thought we were getting back on track. I was hoping he would have popped the question by now, but he seemed to be waiting for something. I have asked him severally why he was unwilling to take the step, and he always avoided answering the question altogether. I decided I needed to give him an ultimatum. We weren't getting any younger; most of the people that got together when we did were married with children. We met when I was nineteen. I was now twenty-three, and we were still in the early stages of our relationship, fixed to one spot, unmoving. It was frustrating.

I have heard people ridicule me because of this, claiming I am aiming higher than my status. Some even say I am trying to raise my family's status by snagging a rich guy, but none of those things ever got to me. Tomas showed me that he genuinely loved me, and I knew I would have felt the same about him if he were from a poor family.

The alpha and his family were the wealthiest among us, powerful and highly influential. The lower class were insignificant. We were easily intimidated and highly submissive. My mother always told me there can't be a leader without followers. One day they will come to understand our relevance. Cross-breeding between the higher and lower

breeds was kicked against, but some people still scaled through it and got together; that was why my relationship with Tomas wasn't completely hopeless.

People could upgrade their status. They could become more relevant if they became influential and made a lot of money, but the higher families made this impossible for us by keeping the key positions and gainfully paid employment offers within themselves.

There was no poor high breed. They always had money or someone to lift them up.

In search of status upgrades and financial stability, the lower breeds joined the mob or practically lived in the Casinos, trying to make their big win. That first big sum that will lift their family from the ground. My father was caught in that world, sadly making him an addict. He had gambled everything away. Our family used to have enough. We weren't rich, but we were okay. My father gambled us into destitution, and I knew if there was anything worse than being poor, we would be there because he couldn't stop.

If Tomas marries me, my family will have some money and influence by association. That was why people believed I was with Tomas for the gain. Yet that was no excuse for him not to want to move our relationship forward. I decided I was going to give him an ultimatum. If he wasn't planning on marrying me, we might as well end it so I can move on with my life. I hoped that wouldn't be the case because I loved him.

I got out of the shower and decided to prepare for the day. Trying to get a job as a Book Keeper was pretty hard, primarily because of my status. Most firms were uncomfortable hiring people like me for critical positions in their company. They claimed I would not have the confidence and authority needed for the job. How the fuck was my family going to escape poverty if we were not allowed good jobs?

I secretly loathed my father for the mess he put us in, but I had to keep trying. Hopefully, I will get lucky one day. I promised myself if that ever happened, I would apply myself and lift our financial status. If not for anything but for the sake of my brothers who were having it hard in every aspect of their lives.

My pack was fucked up.

Just as it should be in every werewolf world, we had one Alpha family, and the head of that family was in charge of our pack. There were several packs in our country with different Alphas. Above the Alphas were the mob families. They controlled and ruled everything.

Due to my predicament, I had resulted in applying for a job in an establishment outside my alpha's territory. My chances were higher there, but it was prohibited, so I had to be careful about it.

Knowing I had to walk from my house to the company where I had an interview appointment because I had no transport money, I got ready immediately. I did not want to miss my appointment.

It wasn't long before I finished dressing up; I heard my brothers having a heated argument. I left my room immediately to see what was wrong. The moment I was in view, they went silent as if they did not want me to hear what they were discussing.

"What is going on?" I asked Kyle. He was the youngest. We had only a two-year age gap, but I let him know I was older. He looked at Tevin, the most senior, and Tevin sighed.

"Emma," Tevin said. He was holding an envelope in his hands. They were shaking, and I knew that whatever was in it was the cause of the problem.

"Emma, I know you are a tough girl, and I know you are good at getting over things," he said, and I looked at him impatiently, but that did not make him hasten his speech.

"Tomas is getting married to the Alpha's daughter," He said, and I frowned at him. Shock washed over me, and I could not believe what he had just said. Was it a joke? But he wasn't smiling. My brother was too serious-minded to joke like this. I had just spoken to Tomas, and he said he would talk to me later. Maybe it was a different Tomas, but the beta only had one son, and his name was Tomas. Slowly the shock became rage. I felt humiliated and insulted by Tomas. I had just spoken to him this morning, and he didn't sound as if anything was the matter. I reached for the envelope to see the content.

"They were cruel enough to send us an invitation," Tevin said while I opened it to see its content. It was a wedding invite, and my boyfriend was the groom.