

The Silver Hope by Sheila Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Hope

I sat on the fence of the farm looking out through the horizon. I just loved how the orange and red sky would meet the mountains as it sets and the sky turns dark. Not a lot of people like the dusk. I just loved it.

Tomorrow is my 18th birthday. The day of the Summer Solstice when the moon was lowest in the sky. I just graduated high school as the class valedictorian and have been accepted to University. My mother and father are so proud. Especially my mother. You could always hear her tell people how proud she is of her baby.

We live in a small town of Chelan in Washington State. For 18 wonderful years, this is the place I call home. My family and I live in a red farm house with white shutters. A two story house filled with all the happy memories of my childhood. I remember the day I learned how to ride a bike. I was able to ride on my own on the path that leads to my Dad's apple farm. I stayed on my pink bike for two whole minutes before I fell down on the pavement. My Dad came running towards me, worry on his face when he saw me hugging my knee, blood flowing down on my white shorts. I looked up at him and said, "Sorry Dad. I didn't stay on long and I got a scratch. He started laughing, telling me he was proud of me for staying on that long. He picked me up and brought me inside the house to clean up my wound. That was the first time he noticed my accelerated wound healing. "Well, Hope, you are indeed special," he said..

Here in Chelan, my father grows the sweetest Red Delicious apples in all of Washington. He won the award 5 times in a row. My father said when they had me, the apples for some reason became so sweet and juicy and have been like that all these years. Plus, the trees give fruit all year round. Another blessing for having me.

I never get tired of the story of how I got my name, HOPE. My mother said the moment she held me in her arms, the raging storm that was happening around us, suddenly quieted. The clouds moved to show the full moon of the Summer Solstice whose light shone on me. I looked like a glistening diamond...a star. My mother, then and there, named me Hope as a reminder. A baby as precious as me is a light through the darkest of times.

Yep, I know I'm adopted, but in no way would I trade my adoptive parents. Even if my real parents didn't want me, they did me a huge favor and gave me to the best parents anyone could wish for. My mother is a small Filipina woman. She's a teacher at the local grade school. She has a big heart for all her students and even calls them "her children". I love her cooking. When her friends are over, she works up the kitchen and cooks all the Filipino dishes she can make. Good thing I love to run. If not, I'd gain weight from all her food.

My father, who has the most caring green eyes, is the gentlest man on this planet. He couldn't hurt a fly even if he tried. He may have that rifle in the closet, but he has never used it on anyone. We just do target practice from time to time. He says it doesn't hurt to know how to protect yourself. I go fishing with him, camping, make furniture, hell, I even learned a little on how to fix cars. Yep, I'm Daddy's Little Girl.

I'll be leaving home soon to go to University for Pre-Med. My mother wants me to become a medical doctor. My Dad well, he would rather I help him on the farm. I laugh at the thought then it hits me. The sadness. It hurts me to leave my parents, but mom

says blessings should be shared. She thinks I'm destined for great things. Scratch that. Not thinks, knows.

Unlike my mom, I'm tall at 5'8. I have long legs and long black hair. I have pale skin and honey colored eyes. My dad says he finds it strange boys aren't pounding on our door because he says I've grown up to be a beautiful young woman. I don't have the heart to tell him I intimidate the whole lot of them. Even the hormone raging jocks who want to "score" with every girl. Not me though. They need me to help them out with their schoolwork. They screw me, they screw with the chance of getting a passing grade. I touch my necklace. Nothing is known about my biological parents. I only have this necklace as an heirloom. The pendant is shaped into a crescent moon with a star on the tip where a diamond lays in the center. Engraved on it is some writing I can't read. Just like my pendant, I also have a crescent-shaped birthmark with a star on my hip. My mom said it might go away in time like most birthmarks do. Mine seems to have become more prominent over the years. I sometimes imagine it sparkles.

The wind picks up suddenly, swirling around me and I smell it. The scent of fresh cut grass and wood shavings. Two of my favorite things.

"Do you smell that, my child? Follow it," says a woman's voice.

I sat there thinking against it. The first time I heard voices, I freaked out my mom. She wanted me to see a psychiatrist because hearing voices isn't a good sign. I explained they were guiding me to do things. My mom said, "Ok, but before you do whatever these voices tell you to do, sit down and think before you do. AND, if it becomes too much to handle, tell me so we can go see an expert. So far, whatever I hear, hasn't gotten me into trouble. So why not follow that scent? As the wind picks up again, I jump off the fence and follow the scent.