

My Heart

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A young teenage girl is kidnapped because of her heratige and forced to become a Steil, an elemental being bound for war. Will she get away or adapt to the unnatural life the Steils?

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1 - Prolouge

Prolouge

"You know I'm going to kill you, don't you?" hissed Aldolphus.

"Yes," declared Rose, brushing her long black hair out of her eyes.

The two stood there, staring at each other as the evening sun shed the last of its light.

Screams rang out all around them, but they didn't care, they had only eyes for each other. To them, war was just another part of life. It killed. It screamed. It was the thing that kept life entertained.

A smirk spread across Aldolphus's pale cheeks, "I was hoping you'd make the first move so I could at least get a little entertainment before I had to kill you."

With a screech, Aldolphus lunged at Rose, claws outstretched. He raked the elongated nails across the young girl's back and pulled her into a death-embrace, her wrists held tightly behind her back.

"Ha!" she breathed, "you'd never get that little pleasure out of me." Shoving her elbow in his gut, Rose was able to squirm away.

"If you had only listened to Thordon, you might have a chance at life, but you don't now! My nails were painted with a special leaf polish before the battle, giving them the power to secrete a deadly poison that slows your breathing every time you inhale."

Cackling, Aldolphus attacked Rose again. His cuts and gashes were swift and painless, yet the pain would grow with every intake of breathe. Rose was able to slice him with her sword, but he'd just heal himself right back up.

I hate vampires, thought Rose as she dodged one of Aldolphus's attacks.

"C'm on, Half-breed," taunted Aldolphus, licking his lips and brandishing his extra sharp canines, "You too afraid to stand up like a real Draculian?"

"Who said I wanted to be Draculian?" gasped Rose, the poison starting to take action.

"Why Thordon and his princely self did. He said you'd be his one and only love for eternities to come, princess and soon to be queen of our pure-blood race."

"That was before I knew he was a Draculian. Why didn't he just stay Viktorian like Vor and Von, our kings?"

"Why? Why?!" thundered Aldolphus, circling Rose, "Because he didn't want to side with those righteous Viktorians, that's why. Plus, who other than the Viktorians would want to create an alliance with those dogmatic Steils?!"

"I would!" screamed Rose as a sharp pang zipped up her one of her lungs, across her chest, and down the other. A chill from the low-blowing wind racked her body and she sank to her knees.

"And that's why your in this predicament," scoffed Aldolphus, crouching down in front of the suffering Rose, "Why couldn't you just be a normal princess?"

He cupped her chin in his hand and turned her head to face the sun. "Isn't it beautiful. The sun rises with the Steils and sets with the vampires," Aldolphus turned Rose so that she could see the terrifying glint of murder in his sea-green eyes. "Tonight, though, it's going to set not with all the vampires, but with the reigning Draculians."

The glint of a knife glittering in the setting sun's light was the last thing Rose would ever see.

2 - Chapter 1

Chapter 1

"Hurry up, Toren!" called Jessica, her voice ringing loud and clear across the playground.

"Yeah! You don't want to get soaked, do you?" cried MiRee as a crack of thunder boomed, startling the teenagers.

Toren was a normal fifteen-year-old girl in a normal world. No fantasy. No excitement. Only life that was so boring sometimes that it drove you into a massively crazed state of mind. That's why she hated life most of the time. "Why can't I live in a fairytale?" she used to ask herself, "Why can't I live the adventure?"

"Toren!" called Jessica again. A light sprinkle came flowing down from the dim, gray sky as thunder announced the storm's arrival. Toren hurried over to where MiRee and Jessica huddled under a dogwood tree. "We gotta hurry home before it starts pouring."

"Yeah," whispered Toren, brushing her dark brown hair from in front of her eyes.

The three girls ran from under the green tree towards the thin dirt path that led to their small culdassac. The dirt had turned to brown, leaf-infested mud though, so they had to run along the grassline so as not to get their feet muddy.

Rain streaked down the girls' cheeks as they ran, huffing, down the pathline.

"Hurry," gasped MiRee pulling a tree limb out of the girls' way.

"We know!" cried Toren, helping Jessica over a decomposing log.

The girls ran for about an hour, over logs and hills, through thorn bushes and tall ferns, down past overflowing creeks and twisted trees until they had to stop and rest. They climbed up some browning vines and into a small niche under an overhanging rock.

"We are in so much trouble," chattered the freezing Jessica.

"I know," sighed Toren, leaning back against the side of a small boulder, "My mom's gonna scream."

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"Toren!!" cried the girl's mother, "Your soaking wet! Look at you, leaves in your hair, mud on your shirt, grass-stains on your brand-new jeans! What am I going to do with you?!"

"I'm sorry," mumbled Toren, shifting her position, "I got home as fast as I could."

"Well you should have gotten home faster! Now go wash up. We're having steak tonight and it's going to be ready soon, so hurry."

Toren ran up to her room above the garage and grabbed some clothes and took off for the shower. Stripping her muddy shoes and soaked-through jeans, she climbed into the hot shower. Steamy liquid ran down her face and arms, rinsing them of the forest debris. Porcelain skin showed from under the dirt and brown hair cleansed itself in the water. Toren quickly finished her shower. Stepping out of the tub, she heard a crash from outside the door. Startled, she almost dashed out the door to find out what the problem was, but then remembered how Conner, her little brother, was jumping around beforehand and just brushed it off as him having fell on his face.

"Haha!" chuckled Toren, pulling on her clothes, "Serves him right."

But..., thought Toren, combing out her hair, *Why couldn't it have been something magical, like*

a unicorn bursting through the back door into the living room, or a giant walking back to his beanstalk, his footsteps like the thunder from the storm.

" Ugh! I live the most boring of life ever!!"

Swiftly wiping the steamed mirror so that she see her normal dull, blue eyes, Toren stepped out into the hall. She heard no clanging of pots or pans or any signal that dinner was being prepared. She didn't hear Dad's nascar race going on the television or Conner playing.

Where is all the noise? wondered Toren, Oh! Didn't Mom mention that we'd be having grilled steak tonight? That means they're probably out on the deck...

Laughing at her own foolish worries, Toren raced back up to her room. " I'll play Mom her favorite song on the piano so she'll forgive me and hopefully cool down." The song 'Greensleeves' resonated through the house, loud and clear. But, no mother came tromping up the stairs to listen to the aria, nothing came at all.

Where is everyone? Surely they can here it outside, can't they?

Toren turned up the music as loud as it would go and played the song three times over. Still, no one came.

" Gosh darnnitt!!" cried the infuriated teen," Where is everyone?!"

Annoyed, Toren stomped down the stairs into her parent's bedroom. Her parent's weren't there. She turned down the hallway and entered her brother's toy-covered room and then went onto the guest bedroom. Still no sign of her family.

" Okay, now I'm freaked out," said Toren to her cat, Speckle, who lay basking in the evening sun. She called again and again for someone, anyone, but no one answered. Clenching her fists in intense excitement, Toren waltzed into the living room. And there, laying on the couch in a heap, was her mother badly bruised and cut. On the floor lay Conner.

Bewildered, Toren ran to the phone and tried to dial '911', but her clumsy fingers fumbled with the buttons and dialed the wrong number. Trembling, she tried again, but did not succeed. Toren was numb with shock. Who would trapse into a house, beat-up its residents, and leave without taking anything. She finally dialed the correct number and held the phone up to her ear when something emerged from the shadows of the entertainment center.

" I wouldn't do that if I were you," thundered a deep, dark voice. Turning to look at the figurine, Toren saw a abnormally tall man, his body totally built of muscle. Long blonde hair with burgandy-red streaks cascaded down his shoulders like waterfalls to stop at his lower back. The man wore a strange looking chestplate with ivory carvings intricately designed to make small balls of flame over a linen shirt and rough cotton-like pants. "What are you looking at?" asked the man, staring straight into Toren's eyes with his blood-red ones.

Toren felt like she was going to be sick. Her head pounded and her body swayed in place. The man immediatly stepped forward, his leather boots soundless on the plush carpet, and grabbed Toren's arm and held her fast.

" What is your name, girl?" boomed the seemingly unearthly voice.

" T-Toren," whispered the frightened girl, startling herself. *I think I'm going to faint.*

" Toren...Toren," uttered the man, testing out the name," It's a lovely name." He smiled at Toren and winked.

Taking this small chance, Toren kicked the man hard and mercilessly in his shin. He let out the most blood-curdling wail and let go of his hold on Toren. Swiftly, the girl dropped the phone and raced out the back door behind her. She hurdled down the steps of the wooden deck and across the green yard, toward the forest path.

I'm almost there! cried Toren's mind, *I'm almost to the path.*

" Ahh!" yelped the girl falling, to her knees after tripping on some large object. But Toren's

adrenaline and conscience would not let her give up. She quickly got to her feet and began running again. She glanced back to see what she had tripped on. " Oh my gosh!!" screamed Toren, turning back and running to her unconscious father lying in the grass.

" Dad!dad!" she cried, hot tears running down her cheeks.

" Dad!dad!" mocked the mysterious man walking out of the house," Daddy's not gonna help you now!!"

Toren turned and ran down the path into the trees. " Great idea!" he called," I love a good chase!"

Leaves crunched under Toren's feet as she ran and branches swung to scratch her cheeks. Sweat poured down her temples and back just like the shivers caused by the evening air that were now consuming her. Toren was going as fast as she possibly could and even more. She took a chance and glanced behind her. She couldn't see the man, but could hear his frightening laughter. Thunder boomed in the distance along with the crackle of lightening. The clouds overhead had turned a dark gray and reflected no light in the setting sun.

Toren's breath now came in labored heaves and her legs were slowing. Every second she got more tired. Every time her foot fell, her legs got heavier. Her eyes closed half-way, droopy with exhaustion, but the adrenaline pumping inside her kept her worn out legs going.

A small clearing lay ahead, actually more of a dust patch. Toren was now so worn, that she had to bend over and lean on her knees her knees to be able to breathe at least partly correct. The teenager looked up to check her surroundings, because she wasn't that familiar with the forest paths. For all she knew, she could have turned down a strange path in her hurry to get away from the scary man chasing her. Trees surrounded her on all sides except one, where a fork lay. One led down a hill onto a vastly log-covered dirt path that looked like it hadn't been used in years, while the other path led straight out onto a well-worn path.

Which one? Toren thought, Which one should I follow.

Toren knew that the second path was the wiser choice, but in all of the scary books and movies she had read and seen, the dark, sinister like path was usually the right one to go down.

I'll go down the first path, she thought, To trick the man. He'd expect me to go down the clear path and go that way while I got away on the evil looking path. Oh why did I have to get the messed up adventure in life?!

Toren quickly collected herself and headed towards the first path, but before she could even take one step toward the path and safety, a twig snapped behind her. *Oh no! It's all over!*

The frightened girl turned around slowly to see what was behind her, but nothing was there. Confused, Toren turned to go, when another stick snapped not two feet away from her, but nothing was there either. Suddenly, twigs were snapping all around her. Right in front of her and yet there was nothing to make them snap. Scared out of her wits, Toren screamed.

" What are you hollerin' about?"

Toren froze. The strange man from before was standing right behind her. Spinning around, Toren looked straight into the blood-red eyes of her stalker. Stunned, she couldn't move. Her heartbeat fluttered and quickened inside her chest.

" You're a strange one," chuckled the man, picking Toren up by her upper arms. Toren tried kicking, but the man held her clear of his legs." Sorry," was all he said as he placed his coarse hand over Toren's mouth, a cloth drenched in a sleeping draught cupped in his palm. She only had to inhale one time before she slipped into the darkness of unconsciousness.

3 - Chapter 2

Chapter 2

The murmur of voices flowed into the room like a silver stream of water flowing to quench a parched deer's thirst. The mumbling was what awoke Toren. She opened her eyes and saw a plain white popcorn ceiling. Soft blankets surrounded her sore and tired body; a fluffed pillow lay beneath her head.

"Where am I?" groaned Toren pushing her tired body into a sitting position.

Toren was laying in a normal mahogany bed made for two with white linen sheets covering her like the grass covers the earth. At the foot of the wooden bed was a small trunk and a standing lamp. A pair of cream-colored french doors leading out onto a compact balcony sat next to the lamp on the left. Opposite the glass doors was a normal brown wooden door leading to who-knows-where! Beyond the french doors stood a miniature writing desk and its companioned chair. Standing on the desks right were two folding closet doors painted a light blue. Behind the backboard of the bed rested a vanity and its matching stool which was also surrounded by standing lamps. Adjacent the vain mirror was a dark blue couch which looked well-worn with all of its patches and stains.

Suddenly, a muted laughing sounded from behind the mysterious brown door. Startled, Toren let out a small squeak and pulled the covers over her head.

Where am I?, wondered Toren, Where is Mom? And Dad? Conner?! What happened to the strange man and his red eyes? Oh!why did I get the messed-up adventure?!!

Toren let out a deep sigh and collected her courage and stepped out of the bed. The hard-wood floor was coll on her toes. Looking down at herself, Toren saw that she was not in her usual atire, but in a different set of clothes. A long white night-gown reached all the way to her knees and suddenly cut short. A torn blue lace skirted the edge.

Who changed my clothes?!, screamed Toren's thoughts. A small but cruel chill ran down Toren's spine as she thought of the man with eyes that sparkled with the gleam of murder.

More unexpected laughter rose up from behind the wooden door. Quickly but quietly, Toren tiptoed over to the door. Leaning her ear cautiously on the door, she listened for any talking, but the laughter had lowered to a murmur. Unable to make out what the people were saying, Toren leaned even more on the old door. A loud creak sounded from the weight put on it.

"Oh no!!" gasped Toren in horror as the quiet babble behind the door ceased. *I am so dead!*

Toren took a small step from the door and was prepared to run, but it was too late. The brass doorknob twisted and the wooden door creaked open to leave the strange man with the terrifying eyes standing right in front of her.

"Good, your awake. I was just coming to get you. Come," he ordered, taking Toren's hand and leading her out of the warm room. He lead her through a four-way hallway into a separate room. As they passed, Toren was able to cathch a glimpse of each hallway. The corridor leading to the left led straight to a dead end with a white door on one side. To her right, it led to another dead end, but with no doors of any kind.

Out in the new room, Toren looked around and discovered it was a living room and kitchen melded together to create one big room; the left the living room area and the right the kitchen space. Three dark blue couches just like the one in the first room, but wholer-looking, sat on a cream colored carpet. They were positioned around a flat-screen television and low coffee table. The kitchen contained

all of the everyday kitchen utensils and most on the large instruments, like the fridge and the stove, were stainless steel. A stack of bananas and other assorted fruits lay ripened in a bowl on the granite countertop.

Turning to Toren, the stranger lifted her up off of the ground and threw her over the back and onto a couch. Sitting on the couch next to her's, sat two more men.

" So you really did find one of them," breathed one of the new strange men, scrutinizing Toren carefully with his bright blue-gray eyes. Light blue hair that fell to the mid-back surrounded the man's pale-peach face. Toren thought she saw pointed ears poking out as well. The new stranger was garbed in a light gray tunic and black slacks. This man was a little less muscular than the red-eyed man, and he wore no armor.

" Yes," replied the red-eyed man, " So it seems." The third man grumbled something that Toren didn't catch.

Turning to inspect the last man, Toren saw a short-tempered man the second she glanced at him. This man was clothed in a pair of dress slacks and its matching shirt. Ebony gloves and boots enclosed his hands and circled his feet. Small red rubies were inset in the gloves, but were covered with dirt in places. Black unruly hair was combed forward to overhang a tanned face. This man's ebony gaze was almost as bad as the red-eyed stranger's.

I'm suprised he's not wearing a trenchcoat and out hunting vampires, thought Toren, letting out a soft chuckle.

" May I help you?" asked the black-eyed stranger. Toren's breathe caught in her throat. *Oh Toren! What have you done now?!!*

" Oh stop it, Therin. Your scaring the poor thing." The black-eyed man turned his disturbing glare to face the blue-haired man. *The black-eyed man must be Therin, then.*

" Shut-up, Furlilly," was the tart remark the Therin gave.

" Make me."

" If I have to I wil-"

" Both of you, shut-up!" snapped the red-eyed man, cutting off Therin mid-sentence. " In case you've forgotten, we have a guest." He gestured toward Toren and all eyes turned to stare at her. The youg girl could feel the blood rush to her face and she knew she was blushing.

" My name's Rune Cornfelliou," continued the man, taking a seat one cushion away from Toren, " This is Furlilly Burkforth," he gestured to the man with blue hair and then to Therin, " And Therin Mellfordion, and we are your new mentors."

All Toren did was stare at them until Rune began to chuckle.

" First-thing's-first, where am I? Were is my family? Who are you freaks?! What Do You Want With Me?!! AND WHERE ARE MY CLOTHES?!!!" Toren was screaming and trembling with rage and fear by the time she was finished.

" Just calm down," said Rune, reaching out his hand in a comforting manner.

" Calm down? Calm down?! How can I calm down after I've been kidnapped?! I want to know, and now!!!"

" Oh really?" challenged Therin.

" No duh. I've only been sitting here, screaming my head off about being left out of your little circle of information." Therin stood and walked over to stand in front of Toren.

" Do you really want to know?" he asked.

" Yes, for the final time--"

Toren was cut off by a swift smack belonging to Therin. A stinging sensation spread through Toren's cheek making it feel numb. Tears sprang into her eyes. *That's gonna hurt in the morning,* thought Toren.

" Therin!" cried Furlilly.

" Like I said before, shut-up," and with that, Therin stormed through door next to the couch he was sitting on and away. Silence consumed the room except for a little sniffing coming from Toren who had begun to tear.

" Well," said Furlilly breaking the silence, " I guess I'll just be going to bed now. I'm leaving you to inform her on the reasons." He stood with less of a angry manner and left the room. Silence resumed for a good ten minutes as Toren cried silently. Rune got up at some point and got a glass of water for Toren and himself.

" Thanks," sniffed Toren taking the glass and gulping down half of it in two seconds.

" Your welcome," smiled Rune, leaning back and laying his head on the couch cushion.

" Still, when will you tell me why kidnapped me."

" If you really want to know, I'll tell you now." Letting out a deep sigh, Rune continued.

" We'll start with me and my comrades. We three are an almost extinct side-race of human beings--"

" What do you mean?" interrupted Toren, finishing off her glass.

" Just wait! I'm gettin' there. Yeesh! As I said before, we are part of an almost wiped out race. I take back what I said about Steils being a branch off the human race, that's more of a vampire or were-wolf."

" But vampires and were-wolves aren't real."

" Wanna bet?" mocked Rune. Toren shook her head 'no'. "Good. Now will you please stop interrupting me? Gosh. Steils are a race of extremely durable people. We have massive amounts of strength and super-natural powers. Each Steil has his or her own element,

" Elements are the source of our strange power. The four Elements are Fire, Water, Thunder, and Air. No one controls the earth, because the earth is the one gave us these gifts. You must choose what Element you belong to, but if you get it wrong, you die." *That's probably why your race is almost extinct, dummy*, thought Toren shifting her position to a more comfortable one.

" I, myself, are one of the Fire people. The Fire people have their own clan and special techniques, but I must keep these names secret or else die of a terrible curse placed upon my people. Everyone has a curse placed upon them by their clans, making them keep their mouth shut about the clans secrets or die a horribly painful death. Everyone's curse is different though, so I can't tell you anyone's, but I heard that the Thunder clan's was the worst." Rune got up and filled up their glasses once more.

" So you're part of the Fire clan," said Toren, what's so special about it?"

" You know you just insulted me in two ways," chuckled Rune, sitting back down, " Number one, the Fire clan is the most popular and it isn't as terribly special as the others. Number two, being in the Fire clan lets me do this," And with that a small flame appeared on the tips of Rune's fingers with a snap.

" How did you do that?!" gasped Toren, reaching out to touch the dancing blaze.

" I wouldn't do that if I were you," said Rune, blowing out the flame," Fire Steils blazes are hotter than normal fire. They burn you badly and usually leave scars. I'd show you mine, but we're getting off track and it's late."

And was Rune right. Toren glanced out a side window and saw that the sun was disappearing behind the shadowy veil of night.

" The second most popular clan and the first that ever existed was the Thunder clan. Everything about the clan is mysterious, even the clans whereabouts are unknown. That's how secretive they are. Therin is actually the prince of the clan, so you'll have to excuse his snob-like prince moments. He thinks he can do anything, but don't let his lies get to ya'. He isn't any more powerful than Furlilly or

me.

" The last two Elements are the rarest of all. First, there's the Air clan which Furlilly belongs to. They aren't so secretive, though. They share all about their flying techniques to others, but they say they're bragging, not telling the whole world their secrets. Their weird, so watch out.

" Last but not least, there is the Water clan. This race is extinct as we know it, so prey to God that that isn't your clan.

" Why? When my friends and I were little and pretended we could control everything, I was always the one to be the 'Water Queen'," said Toren.

" Well, you don't want that Element, because Furlilly nor Therin nor I could teach you anything about you Element because it's secret, duh. Now, it's getting late, so go to bed," finished Rune, getting to his feet.

" But you never told me why you kidnapped me!" cried Toren, standing inbetween the door and Rune.

" Move. I'll tell you tomorrow."

" No! I want to know now!! Ah!!" yelled Toren as Rune shoved her aside and stepped out the door.

" Goodnight," he called over his shoulder as he closed and locked the door.

"UGH!!!" squealed Toren stomping her foot and walking back to the bedroom. Toren flopped down on the bed and let out a trembling sigh.

Why did I get the messed up adventure?

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