

Chosen: Book One

Chosen Angels

By Kathryn Tracy

Acknowledgements

***To my friends, family, and all those who
have supported me: I thank you very much
and hope this book takes you away from
your troubles into a new world. I love you
all.***

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*Observing the love that binds people together is to have
witnessed a powerful thing on Earth.*

-Tiernay Bookless

Chapter 1

In the midway between sleep and consciousness it was like something in my brain had clicked. Suddenly I was wide-awake. The hairs on the back of my neck stood on end, *something was wrong*. I threw the sheets off me and toppled onto the floor landing on my feet causing a thud. It was the middle of the night and I couldn't see a thing. My eyes had not yet adjusted to the darkness as I slowly stood from my crouching position, feeling my way towards the door. I fumbled for the handle of my bedroom door, flung the door open and rounding a bend flew down the hallway towards the front door, my exit, my escape. I anxiously awaited my freedom and the feeling of fresh air reaching my lungs. Sweat began to bead on my forehead, not from my flight to the door but from nerves. As I neared the front door I got *that* feeling, the feeling that creeps into the pit of your stomach on those dark lonely nights telling you something is not right.

And then it happened. Instantly I was surrounded. I counted five but it was hard to tell. Panicked, I made one last lunge for the front door but when I opened it I found myself face to face with another intruder. I stumbled backwards in shock. By now the five I had counted earlier had come out of the shadows and were closing in on me apparently I had counted right, so far there were only five of them minus the dude at the door. I could see them all clearly now from the moonlight streaming in through a window, a window I just now noticed was broken. There was a full moon out tonight. It took me a second before I realized I recognized one of them; the intruder in the doorway.

“Rico?” I questioned accusingly. Ignoring me he stepped inside and made himself at home.

“What are you doing here Rico,” I said menacingly.

He then threw himself on the couch, taunting me. “Love the outfit. Really, you dress up just for us?” he sneered.

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Rico and I used to go the same middle school before he got kicked out. He was short for a guy with black hair and dark skin. He wore baggy jeans and a ghetto shirt with a naked woman on it.

I kept my mouth shut because I knew he wanted me to go off on him, wanted to get a rise out me, and if he thought I was going to play into his hands he was wrong; I knew how guys like him worked. It was two a.m and I was in my pj's. My hair was sticking up at all ends, I wore an overlarge T-shirt that hung to my knees, and sleep shorts. I was barefoot down to my last pinky toe; no giant funky pink bunny slippers for me. I suddenly felt very exposed standing there in just my t-shirt and shorts.

I crossed my arms over my chest, "What do you want Rico?" I repeated demanding to know what he was doing here.

He stood, I started to take a step back but stopped, I would stand my ground. I wasn't afraid of him. This was still my house.

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“No, I mean it,” he cocked his head as if pondering something. “Mickey, how *cute*,” he said indicating the insignia of the Mickey Mouse caricature displayed on my t-shirt, letting his fingers play over the edge of my sleeve.

I slapped his hand away hard enough that it made a sound. It surprised him. I continued to glare at him. At that he threw his head back and let out a laugh that sounded more like the squawking of a dying chicken. I was very aware of the people at my back however; I was more focused on Rico. I had to admit they had me cornered. The only thing I could hope for is they get on with what they came for. I knew this wasn't the best idea but I was tired of feeling like a sitting duck.

“Hey Rico are you all talk and no walk?” This got his attention.

He got right up in my face, “what's that?”

“You heard me, what are you doing here besides to take up space on my couch?”

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That got him, anger flashed across his face for a split second and then he was Rico again.

“Well amigos looks like the chica here would prefer we get down to business,” he said grinning.

This time when he stepped towards me I stepped back for when he looked at me only one word came to mind, “prey”. He turned away from me, and then caught me by surprise as he slapped me so hard I fell to the floor. I tried to get back up and was halfway there but he shoved me back down. I struggled but froze when he pulled out a switchblade. I swallowed the gasp that had formed in my throat as my eyes followed the switchblade closely. He held it to my throat. The thought of that cold steel against my skin never left my thoughts for a second. Rico was grinning at me, watching me squirm. I stared straight into his eyes giving him the coldest stare I could muster. The smell of cigarette smoke smothered me, made me want to gag, Rico reeked of the junk. He pushed the blade threateningly closer to my neck.

“We have a message for you little chica,” he said. Then he leaned in closer positioning his mouth directly beside my ear. Whispering in my ear he said each word slowly and with precision. “You ...*ever*... come... near... the... Snakes... territory... again, I’ll kill you”.

My eyes widened. The Snakes were a street gang. Commonly known gang members had snake tattoos to mark their membership. I glanced down at Rico’s forearm and there it was, the Snake tattoo. I had noticed it earlier, but thought nothing of it. Rico was part of a gang, when had this happened? This must be some part of his initiation to prove his *loyalty*. Rico then let the blade fall away. He stood. I wanted to get up however, I waited for them to leave, not moving; hardly breathing I watched them walk out the door one by one. When they were gone I let out a huge breath of air that I hadn’t realized I’d been holding, relief washing over me. I stood, happy to be upright again. I went to the front door and very decidedly locked it as if that would keep all the bad guys away.

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“First things first,” I said thinking out loud “I have to get cleaned up.” I needed to wash the stench of those creeps off me, and headed toward the bathroom.

Chapter 2

Early in the morning I was startled from a restless sleep by the sound of banging. It instantly made me jump. After regaining my senses I realized it must be my dad and older brother Tim.

“Emma, open the door! I can’t find the spare key,” called my dad from the other side of the door.

The clock on my bedside table displayed 9:00 a.m. It was a Sunday. I had tried to get some sleep after last night’s events but to no avail. I rushed toward the banging to let in my dad and Tim. I looked through the peep hole first to make sure it was them. My dad and Tim must have just gotten back from his girlfriend’s house. That’s where the rest of my brothers were. We were in the process of moving. I had stayed behind to help get things organized and ready to move, at least I was supposed to when I must have fallen asleep and then those creeps showed up.

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“Hey Emma, sorry I must have left the house key at Tarrasa’s. Did we wake you? How’d you sleep?” asked dad, these questions flying past me as they walked in the door.

I decided to go for truth; because I had a feeling I looked it.

“No, you didn’t wake me, I didn’t sleep too well.”

“Oh, well I’m sorry to hear that, Hun, how ‘bout I make you some eggs while you get dressed?” Dad said helpfully.

“Yeah that would be great.” I answered with a smile, suddenly realizing I was starving.

He had already pulled out a pan for the eggs when he asked me, “Did you finish packing up the rest of your boxes?”

“Yes,” I lied, already on my way down the hall.

“Dad?” I asked, once done getting dressed. “I was wondering, since I’m already packed if you guys could head on over to Tarrasa’s house and I could meet you back there later.” I proposed.

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Dad, known to others as Phil, was a fairly tall man in his forties. He had fluffy brown hair, peppered gray; revealing his age. It was obvious that his hair and beard needed a trim, but other than that he was a pretty decent looking guy. Phil had known for some time now I was not happy with this move and he was not sure I was ok with Tarrasa either. Therefore Phil, seeing that I was in no mood to help with moving and figuring this to be the reason behind it, granted me permission to skip out on today. Good for him for if he hadn't I had a feeling he would have lost me forever. For at the moment I just really needed some space and was in no mood to deal with my family and Dad's new girlfriend.

Finishing my eggs I told my dad and Tim that I would meet them later and headed out the door. Outside I found that the streets were wet from last night's rain, the smell of rain still lingered in the air. The sky was gray and just as the thought of more rain appeared in my head it began to sprinkle. Not

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wanting to get my hair wet I threw my hood over my head and headed out into the spray.

Chapter 3

It being a Sunday afternoon there was no school.

However Carmen Jockolva had the unfortunate task of participating in a meeting for her mother. Her mother, Catherine Jockolva, was a large business owner who inherited the business from her father. Although she herself was not much of a business woman she intended to make Carmen one, hence the meeting. The meeting had just started and she had already started twisting back and forth in a rolling office chair. After a few irritated glances from the members of the board she stopped. The wide glass windows let in little light due to blinds to cut the sun's glare on particularly bright days. There was no need for them today. The room was small, just enough room for a table and enough chairs to accommodate the Board for meetings. Carmen wasn't much of the corporate type, never was and never would be. She was just itching to get out of her white blouse, grey blazer and matching skirt and into regular clothes.

Not to mention her heels were killing her. Until then however, she would just have to sit through this meeting listening to this person drone on and on; who knows how long she'd last.

The rain had begun to die down. Walking across the building's parking structure I found myself face to face with Jockolva Industries. Its' double doors were shiny and waiting. Pulling on the gold handle I walked into the company lobby and approached one of the elevators. The elevator music was tacky as usual, they should probably update those I was thinking to myself, of course then it might not be elevator music. Once on the fourth floor I was greeted by the bustle of people busy at work. At least that's what you would *think* you would see in a Corporate Industry right? No, the first thing I was greeted with was at least ten people standing around a water cooler. However, I had only just walked a few steps when an employee rounding a corner too fast knocked me over, carrying a stack of files and a coffee mug which he preceded to spill all over himself and me. The clumsy fool in question was dressed in

business attire and looked to be about in his early twenties, probably an intern.

After a few minutes of fussing over his coffee stain he helped me to my feet, “If you’re trying to get first in line for the water cooler you’re a little late.” I retorted.

“I’m sorry I didn’t see you there, I was just delivering these files to accounting,” he says as he starts to gather up the scattered files.

“My name's Burt by the way.” The name Burt could be seen clearly displayed on his name tag.

“Emma,” I reply, introducing myself, “Emma Carter.”

“Well, Emma is there anything I can help you with?”

“Yes, actually I’m looking for a friend, I’m told she is in a meeting, can you help me?”

“Uh, sure what’s your friend’s name?”

“Carmen Jockolva.” At this Burt ended up dropping all his files all over again.

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