

Chapter 0276

Author Note: The Inspiration

Have you ever wondered where the inspiration for a story comes from? I know I have... and for this book, I promised you a while back that I would tell you. So here goes.

I mentioned to a friend in passing that I wrote "My Mate's Wedding Drama." That one was written as sort-of a fun, funny project. Not very serious. Something VERY different from my day job.

She asked me, "Is that some sort of therapy for you?"

"Therapy for what? I don't need therapy."

"Well, with your dad in town... and everything with your mom and sister...."

"Oh.... Ohhhhhhhhhh...."

And somehow that was literally all it took. Mated in the Shadow of My Sister was born.

I feel sort-of disingenuous saying I wrote it, because it largely wrote itself. More often than not, the characters took over my keyboard as I typed, or they started yelling plot points to me in the shower or while I was driving. It was sort of a wild ride, to be honest.

To get this book done, I have gotten up at 2 or 3 am for

months. It has been worth it, but it has also been a really tiring and emotional journey for me, becauseas you may have already guessed... the inspiration for this story was my own life.

Ok, obviously I do not come from a family of werewolves. My family also were not criminals. Nor did my sister get murdered or fake her death. And I definitely never had the hots for her boyfriend.

But my mother was very much Margie: mentally ill; manipulative; abusive; determined to live her life through one daughter while ignoring her others.

And my father was very much Robert: a strong but codependent workaholic who dedicated his life to making my mother happy while at the same time (and quite ironically) finding it easier to be out of the home so that he could pretend like she was not who she was.

My father's parents were against my father marrying my mother. Growing up, my mother regularly told her children that and used it as some sort of weird ammunition or excuse for her various bad behavior.

When my parents' favorite daughter --my sister-- passed away far too young, it devastated my entire family. Suddenly, life stopped. My brother refused to even celebrate his birthday for several years, insisting that the day instead be renamed and repurposed as an ongoing celebration for my late sister.

I also became a surprising villain in my own family's story. On paper, many would expect my parents to be proud to have me as a daughter... but they weren't. The looks and comments that Lily got at the beginning of the book are ones that I know well. (You know, the ones where it was made clear to Lily that everyone's life would have been better if it had been her that passed and not Stephanie.)

Some of the dialogue in this book was inspired by real conversations I have had... including especially when Robert stood up at the end and begged Lily to forgive Margie for her sins because Margie was herself hurting.

Anyway, I am aware that this is probably far too much information to share in a forum like this, but at the same time, I think it helps explain the book and adds a certain additional "flavor" to the story.

I know that the ending disappointed many of you, and it left some gaps. Perhaps over the next couple of weeks, I can re-read the final chapters and make some edits so that future readers are not quite as disappointed. 3

At the same time, I have to admit that I never set out to tie up all the loose ends or answer all of the questions. I mean, I wanted to and I tried to resolve what I could, but deep down I always knew I wouldn't get it all done. Because the many moving parts... the complicated relationships... the questions never asked or answered... the strange fixation on some details while others are ignored...all of that is what


makes Lily's story very real and very much my own.

Thank you again for the love and support you have shown to me and this story. I hope you all enjoy the rest of your holidays!

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