

The Alpha King's Human Mate by HC Dolores Chapter 1

Chapter 1

"Fate is not an eagle, it creeps like a rat."

– Elizabeth Bowen

If you were to ask my parents to describe my older brother, they'd tell you he was a natural leader. Fearless and courageous, the kind of man born to lead armies.

And if you asked them to describe my sister, they'd gush about her sweet disposition and her selfless heart.

But me?

There's only one word my parents would use to describe me: human.

You might not think that "human" could be used as an insult, but somehow, I've spent my entire life wearing this word like a badge of shame. When I showed up on my Alpha father's doorstep at twelve, he told the rest of the pack that I was there because of my human mother's failure. I was thrust into the wolf pack – literally – but my status as the only human there made me an instant outcast. I couldn't run or wrestle or shift into wolves like the rest of the neighborhood kids. I'd never meet my mate or experience that instantaneous true love that mated pairs had.

I was still the Alpha's kid, and while that might've saved me from the bullies, it didn't mean I fit in. The werewolf world was drastically different from the human one, and to them, my humanity was a weakness.

My father never told me he was ashamed of me, but I could still feel his disappointment – it hung in the air every time he called me his human daughter or explained that I was the product of a short affair with a human woman eighteen- years-ago. 2

My stepmom, my father's true mate, did try to make me feel included. She was the epitome of the perfect Luna – gentle and good-natured – but I could still tell she was ashamed of me. If there was ever evidence that her family wasn't perfect, I was living proof of it. Every time she looked at me, she was reminded that her mate had cheated on her.)

Try as they might, none of this made a good recipe for the perfect family. I'd spent

six

years living under my father's roof, in his pack, and in the werewolf world, but I'd already accepted that I'd never fit in there.

*Or so I thought. *

Despite making plans to go to college far, far away from the pack that had no room for me, my life was about to change completely. Something technically, someone

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was about to ensure that there was plenty of space in the werewolf world for this ordinary little human.

*Dear Clark Bellevue,

After carefully reviewing your application, it is with regret that we inform you that we are unable to offer you admission into the University of Florida at this time. We appreciate the time and effort put into your application, but unfortunately, this year's large pool of applicants has made our decision difficult and we have limited space for each admitted class. (2

We are confident you will go on to achieve great things in your studies, and we wish you the best in your academic journey!

*Best Regards,

Dean of Admissions

University of Florida*

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I read the rejection email at least five different times, my eyes darting across the screen for something I might've missed. Unfortunately, there was no hidden message to be found it was just another generic rejection email from another college that didn't want me. My senior year of high school was ending, and although I had applied to an endless list of colleges, I'd only received three rejections and one waitlist.

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Most of the schools I applied for were state schools with decent academic records

but really, all I cared about was finding a college that was far away. Somewhere far enough where I'd have an excuse not to make it home on the weekends or for most holidays.

Given that I lived in cold, rainy Washington, Florida's sunny (and distant) climate would've been perfect – but it didn't look like that was going to happen.

“Clark!”

My pity party got cut short by the sound of my sister, Lily, yelling my name. I barely had time to exit out of my Gmail screen before Lily was bursting into my room without even a knock.

“Clark, I've been calling you for the past five minutes,” she sighed, leaning against my door frame, “Were you watching another trashy reality show or just tuning out my voice?”

Although we were half-sisters, Lily and I hardly looked alike. She was tall, fair-skinned, with long, blonde locks that never seemed frizzy or out-of-control. Her and my brother both shared my father's bright, blue eyes. Her eyes were her best feature, and they constantly seemed like they were trying to poke beneath the surface.

“Sorry, I wasn't trying to tune you out, Lil,” I said, “What's up?”

Her piercing blue eyes narrowed, but she seemed to accept my apology. “Dad wants to see us, there's a big meeting tonight at the pack house. A bunch of people are going to be there.”

My eyebrows furrowed. Pack meetings weren't unusual for our pack, but I wasn't

usually required to attend. As Blacktooth Pack's only resident human, I wasn't a huge part of pack business. I couldn't shift, which meant I couldn't participate in patrols or defend the pack.

“Why is dad asking for me?” I asked.

“Not sure,” Lily shrugged, “He just told me to come get you. I'm sure it's for a good reason, dad wouldn't bring you around if it wasn't. Come on.”

Lily didn't waste any more time waiting for me, and I watched her strut out of the room.

Not even the golden child knows why I'm being summoned, I thought, this must be important then.

I followed Lily out of my room, and we descended the stairs in silence. With high ceilings and hardwood floors, our family house was one of the largest in the pack a perk that came with being part of the Alpha's family. Photos of Lily and my brother,

Sebastian's, accomplishments hung on the walls like the trophies they were: Lily as a baby, Seb at his first pack football game, Lily at prom with her friends. 5

As I expected, Dad, Seb, and Grace were all waiting in the living room. Dad lounged in the recliner like it was his throne with Grace perched on his lap while Sebastian stood awkwardly by the mantel.

"Ah, girls, there you are," Dad said, and his booming voice echoed around the room, "We've got a pack meeting tonight and we'll need both of you there."

Even in his forties, my dad didn't look a day over thirty. He shared the same fair hair and blue eyes as Lily, and his strong jawline and intimidating frame made him look every bit like the Alpha wolf he was.

My older half-brother, Sebastian, was just as tall as my dad, but he got his chestnut brown hair from his mother, Grace. Grace – or Luna Grace if you weren't her step-daughter was my dad's true mate and Seb and Lily's biological mom. She was the final piece to this picture-perfect family my dad had created. (3

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"Why is Clark coming to the meeting tonight?" Sebastian asked, glancing over at me. He didn't mean it as an insult – like me, he knew I was rarely needed (or wanted) at pack meetings.

"We'll talk about it at the meeting," dad said, standing up with Grace, "Is everyone ready? It'll be starting soon, we should head over."

We all nodded.

"Oh, Clark, honey," Grace piped up from my dad's side, "Are you sure you don't want to change? That outfit might be a little casual for a pack meeting."

I glanced down at my jeans and plain black t-shirt – it wasn't exactly glamorous, but nobody else was dressed up either. Seb had on a t-shirt and shorts, and Lily rocked a jean skirt and some sort of ruffle top.

"If it's okay, I'll just wear this," I said. Grace nodded, but I could see her eyes do another sweep over my outfit. 4

It's not as if I'm going to be the center of attention here, I thought, the elders will be too busy with dad, the pack warriors are going to have their eyes glued to Lily's ass, and any unmated girls will be flirting with my brother.

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If I was lucky, I'd blend into the background and frankly, that was exactly where I wanted to be at these sorts of events.

"Enough hanging around, let's go," My dad grumbled, taking Grace's hand. He led the way out of the house, Seb, Lily, and I trailing behind him like puppies

– no pun intended. We walked in silence, and I took a moment to appreciate the scenery.

Our pack lived in its own forested community, which meant that most places, like the pack house, were still within walking distance. Family houses lined one side of the street, but you'd eventually run into a pack-run grocery store and infirmary if you kept walking. Pack members were allowed to leave whenever they wanted, but the setup of our community meant that you rarely needed to.

And, if you did need to, you'd still have to answer to the guards that protected our borders. They wouldn't keep you in, but they did make it much harder to sneak out.

The little residential part of the community was just a small part of the pack,

though – most of our territory was just wooded areas where wolves could run, play, and shift anytime they wanted to.

For werewolves, this was the ideal setup.

As a human who wouldn't label themselves as "outdoorsy," living an hour from the nearest town wasn't exactly a high point. I wasn't a prisoner by any means, but there were times when living in Blacktooth territory did make me feel trapped.

With guards running every inch of the property, it was hard to just come and go as I pleased. And since I wasn't a werewolf, I couldn't just shift and run through the woods on four legs like my siblings could whenever I wanted some fresh air.

Whether I wanted to be or not, I was a human living in the wolf's den.