

# The Alpha King's Human Mate by HC Dolores

## Chapter 3

\*"Werewolves are much more common animals than you might think."

Daniel Pinkwater\*

Whispers spread across the room like wildfire.

My human ears couldn't make anything out any of the murmurs from other pack members, so I just tried to focus on keeping calm. 1

Did I want to attend some uber-important diplomatic meeting filled to the brim with short-tempered wolves?

No.

Did I have a choice in the matter?

Also no. I might not have been the hub for all-things-werewolf knowledge, but even I knew that the Alpha King's word was final. If the guy told you that he wanted you at a meeting, you were going to be there.

"Okay, everyone, let's settle down," Dad's voice boomed through the room, and the chatter ceased immediately. "I've already contacted one of the Alpha King's

contacts about Clark's attendance. The King aware that she's human, but she's also an Alpha's daughter, so he's not willing to make an exception." (10

I wasn't sure if I should be pissed or flattered. Part of me was touched that my dad had already gone out of his way to get me out of this whole ordeal, but part of me was pissed that he hadn't said anything to me. He'd clearly known about this meeting for a little while if he had enough time to try and contact the Alpha King, so why was I just now learning about this?

A little heads up would've been nice, that's all.

But then I glanced over at Lily, who had gone pale, and remembered that I wasn't the only one in the dark. Neither of my siblings had any idea about this meeting

either.

"You okay, Lil?" I asked my sister, touching her shoulder. She was still pale, wide, blue eyes fixed on her lap.

At my touch, she looked up and schooled her expression. "I'm fine, don't worry," she said.

I didn't quite believe her, but I didn't want to push – especially here, in front of the rest of the pack.

I looked up at Sebastian. His face was stoic, but even from across the room, I could see his furrowed eyebrows. He was worried.

He was just as much a part of this as Lily and I was, although his presence at a diplomatic meeting made more sense. He was next in line to be Alpha. (2

The meeting is on short notice," Dad continued, "I'll be sending Sebastian, Lily, and Clark off next week. I will not be able to accompany them, but I will send a few pack warriors for safety. I'll speak with those I've picked for that role in private this week. Now, moving on, Healer Ren has informed me that we're running low on a few medical supplies..." 2

The rest of the pack meeting passed in a blur, with dad covering routine, normal pack business. Despite the change of subject, I still felt plenty of eyes on me.

Once dad finished talking, most of the pack began socializing with each other, much like they'd been doing before we showed up.

Lily immediately disappeared into a throng of her friends, and I awkwardly kept to myself on the couch. I had always felt a little socially awkward, but after dad's big announcement, I felt even less like socializing.

"Are you worried, Clark?"

A raspy voice broke my train of thought, and I looked up to see one of the male elders had approached me. I recognized him, he was one of our oldest pack members, but I couldn't remember his name.

"I'm, uh, just surprised," I confessed, "I understand why the King might want future Alphas there, even future Alpha daughters that might be his son's mate. I guess I just feel as if my presence might be unnecessary." I tried to choose my

words carefully. Although the elder had kind eyes, he was still a werewolf, and I didn't want to trash talk the King too much.

"If I had to speculate as to why the King insisted you be there, despite your human status," The elder said, "My guess would be that he doesn't want to take any chances."

"What do you mean? Take any chances about what?"

"About his son, Clark," he said, and he almost looked amused, "Your father said it himself, this meeting is only half about diplomacy. It's also about getting every Alpha daughter in the same room, and giving the Prince an opportunity to find his

mate." 3

"Right, but I'm human. Doesn't that automatically disqualify me from having a mate?"

The old man's lips twisted upwards. "Not exactly. You're an unusual case, Clark. You don't have the wolf gene, but you've still got Alpha blood running through your system. While it's unlikely you'd have a mate, let alone the future Alpha King,

there's still a chance. A miniscule one."

It felt like my world had been rocked twice in one night.

When my dad had given me my werewolf biology lesson all those years ago, he'd never mentioned the possibility of me having a mate. He'd explained that the mating process happened between two wolves that their inner beasts called out

to each other.

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It had been a comfort to me, the idea that I would never have to worry about being chained to some territorial, domineering wolf for the rest of my life. D

"How does that even work, a wolf mating with a human?" I asked, "I've never heard of that. I thought mating happened when two people's inner beasts choose each other. But someone like me doesn't have an inner wolf." E

The elder nodded thoughtfully. "Yes, that is how it usually happens," he said, "Two inner wolves call out to each other. Our inner wolves are intuitive, and they know who is right for us upon first glance. This is why mates recognize each other the first time they make contact. The bond is forged immediately, and there's no going

back. (7

However, there are rare cases. I have seen human-wolf pairings in my lifetime, but only a few times. As I said, it's rare. Having a human mate carries the risk that you'll end up with children that have wolf blood, but lack the actual gene."

"Like me."

"Yes. And most humans are simply not strong enough to survive in this kind of world, they do not understand our pack mentality. Most inner wolves recognize this. It's in our nature to seek strong mates, ones that will bear strong children.

But there have been times, very rarely, when a wolf has recognized a human as worthy of mating. I'm not entirely sure why, that is beyond my wisdom. Only an inner wolf can decide who is the right mate. But from what I understand, human-wolf pairings are exceptionally difficult."

"Why's that?"

"A werewolf spends their entire life learning about the mate bond, and they desire

1. With their inner wolf, there is a natural pull to their mate. They feel the bond constantly, and they can't bear to pull away. It's why divorce and separation don't

exist in our world. The desire for your mate is so strong, no wolf could possibly fathom being away from them. But humans don't have an inner wolf, they don't

feel the bond the same way. I'm not sure if they experience a pull, but if they do, it's nothing like what a wolf feels. And from what I've seen, human mates don't get

handled the same way that regular mates do.

"What do you mean?" I asked.

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The elder smiled ruefully. "Having grown up in this world, you already know how possessive wolves can be, especially male wolves," he continued, "Most wolves are naturally territorial of their mates. It's in our nature to be protective and dominant of what's ours. The higher ranking the wolf is, the more possessive they'll be.

Alphas are the most possessive, and while I've never met the Alpha King or the Prince, I assume they're even worse than normal Alphas. As you know, humans are more fragile than werewolves. Your senses aren't as good, you break more easily,

take longer to heal, and you get sick. Having such a fragile mate would put any wolf on edge – any possessiveness or protectiveness they'd feel just gets amplified ten times over. Several decades ago, one of our pack warriors had a human mate.

He was beside himself with worry about her most of the time, even when she was fine. He wouldn't let her leave the house by herself. He hardly let her cook, he was too worried that she'd cut herself with a knife or burn herself on the stove. He'd

keep her on bed rest for days if he even thought she was getting a cold.”

He shook his head and sighed, “That poor girl. I'm not sure how she ever functioned like that.”

I couldn't see my own face, but I must've looked pretty freaked out because the old man put a comforting hand on my shoulder. “There's no need to worry, Clark,” he said, patting my arm, “I didn't mean to scare you. As I told you earlier, human mates are so rare, they almost never happen. The chance that you'd be a wolf's mate, it's almost impossible.”

Impossible, yes.

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There's no need to make a big deal out of this, Clark. You heard the man – human mates almost never happen, and if they do, it's probably just to uber-special humans.

I took a deep breath, and tried to hold onto that thought.

Everything is going to be okay.

There's no way I have a mate.