

# The Alpha King’s Human Mate by HC Dolores

## Chapter 32

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“Running away is easy. It’s the leaving that’s hard.” Samuel T. Herring

Alessia’s “theory” stuck with me for the entire five-hour plane ride ~ long after we stopped talking and she fell asleep again. Her words sent a chill down my spine. Was Griffin really going to hunt me like prey?

A couple of hours into the plane ride, I ended up falling asleep too

but it was plagued with nightmares.

In my dream, I was a fox sprinting across the foggy forest. I was running away from something - I didn’t know what — and tried to hide in a hollowed-out tree. I could hardly make out my surroundings while I was tucked in my little hiding spot, but then I saw it: the monster that was chasing me.

It was a large black wolf, bigger than anything I’d ever seen with piercing dark eyes and sharp canines. Its familiar dark eyes met mine, and I knew it had me trapped. There was nowhere to run, and all I could do was watch as it stalked closer and closer. And then it pounced, razor-sharp canines headed for me as I - I shot up in my plane seat, heart pounding. That was a hell of a dream. But it wasn’t real — it was just a dream. \*)

I normally wasn’t one to dissect dreams, but even that nightmare felt a little too on the nose to me. I had been running in the wolves as a literal fox — which was Griffin’s favorite nickname for me — and the predator chasing me had been a wolf. Could the meaning get any more obvious than that? (°

Clearly, I’m freaked out about what Alessia told me before I fell asleep

and now my fears are manifesting in my dreams.

My heart continued to pound. Although Griffin and I were probably hundreds of miles apart by this point, the thought of him still managed to put me on edge.

“Passengers, please make sure you’re seated with your seatbelts on. We’re beginning our descent, and we’ll be wheels down at LAX in minus twenty minutes,” the pilot’s voice croaked through the speakers.

The feedback from the speakers roused Alessia from her own cat nap. Judging from the way she lazily stretched out, it looked like her dreams had been a lot better than mine.

“are we already there?” she asked me. “They said less than twenty minutes till we get to the airport,” I said.

“Thank God,” she muttered, smiling. “I hate flying. I want to put my feet — and my paws — on some solid ground.”

“Me too. Not the paws part, of course — but definitely my feet.”

At my response, Alessia looked at me, her smile vanishing. “Well, since we’re almost there, it’s time to fess up.”

“Fess up? About what?”

Her eyes burned into mine and I could feel a shift in the air. The light friendliness between us was gone and I was suddenly reminded of who I was sitting next to: Alpha Alessia, who had slaughtered a member of her own pack to rule it. She meant business.

“It’s time to tell me about my mate, Clarke,” she said, her face blank.

Oh, that’s what she wanted. Did you forget about your own deal, Clarke? Geez, I suck at this stuff.

Mark that down for reason #497 for why I wouldn’t make a good queen. I suck at negotiating.

It’s not that I was trying to withhold information or act coy, but I’d been so wrapped up in my own escape attempt that I’d almost forgotten what I had agreed to divulge for that escape attempt.

“Right,” I said, “Sorry, I just woke up like you. My brain is still a little fuzzy. I’ll tell you who it is.”

She stared at me with unblinking eyes. Her entire body was tense, and it wasn’t hard to understand why. This was life-changing information for her.

And not just for her. For Lily too.

“You said you could smell your mate on me multiple times,” I told her, “You said it the first night we met and then you smelled the scent on my clothes yesterday too.”

She nodded. “Yeah, the scent was faint but it was there. It wasn’t you but it clung to you.”

“Exactly,” I said, “It had to be someone I interacted with pretty closely then.”

I watched her grab the armrest until her knuckles turned white. “Just get to the point, Clark,” she rolled her eyes, “No offense but the thought of you ‘interacting closely’ with my mate kind of makes

me want to tear your throat out. So, just tell me who it is.”

“Oh, right, got it,” I said, eyeing her white knuckles, “In that case, I’m about 99% sure you’re mated to my sister.”

There was silence. Alessia paused completely, like she was frozen in time. “Your sister?” she repeated, raising an eyebrow.

“Hear me out. Remember the night we met?” I explained, “I was sharing a room with my sister, Lily. We had also spent all day together too — she sat next to me on the plane and next to me at

dinner. It makes sense why we’d smell like each other.”

Her eyebrows were furrowed like she was trying to process my explanation.

“But last night is what confirmed it for me,” I continued, “Even though I spent most of the day with Griffin, you were still able to smell her scent on me. Lily and I didn’t interact that much yesterday, but I was wearing her dress.”

Alessia was silent but I noticed that she was no longer clutching the armrest so tightly.

“Lily,” she repeated, “Her name is Lily?” There was a softness in her eyes that I had seen before, but never on Alessia. It was the look that my dad and Grace exchanged. It was the look that Griffin had given me just yesterday.

Don’t you dare start thinking about Griffin right now, Clarke. He’s part of the past now, you’re leaving that chapter of your life behind.

“Yeah,” I said, “She’s like half a year younger than me, and she just turned eighteen. Had you gone to the dinner party or even the diplomatic meeting, you would’ve met her.” \*)

Alessia sighed. “I should’ve known,” she said, “Of course it makes sense. You didn’t come alone and I kept smelling that scent on you — I should’ve figured it out sooner. I could’ve actually met her.”

“Well, you still can,” I said, “As long as you don’t mind a road trip. She lives with my dad, just like me — or just like I used to, I guess. Our pack is in Washington, they live on Blacktooth territory. And hey, now you can meet her on your own terms. As someone who found their mate in the middle of a crowded meeting, it wasn’t ideal.”

“Lily,” she repeated again, “in Blacktooth territory. And you’re sure about this?” I could see suspicion in her eyes. “You’re not trying to screw me over, right?” There was a dangerous edge to her voice as she spoke that last part. I guess I couldn’t really blame her for being cautious, but since Alessia wasn’t shy about violence, I also didn’t

want to give her any reason to think I was lying.) “No, I promise I’m telling the truth,” I said, “I didn’t even put any of this together until yesterday, but based on what you’ve told me, it’s got to be her. There’s nobody else I came in close contact with at the castle besides Lily and Griffin, and we all know it’s not that last one. I guess there’s a chance it could be my brother but —”

“Oh, absolutely not,” Alessia groaned, “It’s definitely got to be the sister. I’m not into anything that has a dick attached to it.” (

“Well, that settles it,” I said, “You’re mated to my sister...and I guess that makes us family!” Although I’d known Alessia was mated to my sister for about a day, the information felt like it was just now sinking in.

Her connection to my sister would forever tie us together. Images of Alessia at family dinners and pack events ran through my brain like a movie montage - and honestly? I didn’t hate it.

Thad always known that Lily was going to end up with a mate and I had dreaded it. I didn’t want to see my sister transform into some submissive shell that only lived to take orders from her Alpha mate.

And, sure, Alessia was an Alpha but I had spent enough time with her to know she wasn’t like the rest. She hated the traditional Alpha system as much as I did. Truthfully, there wasn’t a better person I could think of to be my sister’s one true love. (7

“Well, I guess if we’re going to be family,” Alessia smirked, “Then it’s a good thing I’m helping you out here. Gotta look out for the fam, right?”

I chuckled.

“although I highly doubt I’ll be seeing you at any family functions anytime soon,” Alessia added, “I mean, have you thought this through? Long-term? Or do you just plan to be on the run from your mate forever?”

I shook my head. “No, not forever...but definitely for awhile. I can’t go back to my dad’s place for awhile either, I know that. That would be the first place Griffin would look, but it’s not like I plan to never see my dad, sister, or brother again. I just got to stay away long

enough for Griffin to lose interest and move on.” °)

And to make sure I don’t get stuck living in Blacktooth pack forever.

Alessia rolled her eyes. “I’d tell you that you’re delusional, but I don’t think you’d believe it,” she said, “I’ve already told you — there’s no way your mate is just ‘losing interest’ or ‘moving on.’

That’s not how this works, but whatever helps you sleep at night.”

Although Alessia didn’t believe me, I couldn’t imagine that Griffin would hold onto someone he didn’t even know forever. He was the king of wolves — he’d move on to someone more worthy of him

forever. | And when the heat dies down, maybe I can come back and visit my dad

and the rest of the Blacktooth pack.

After I’ve already gotten to experience a little bit of a human life, that

is. “Alessia,” I said, “Can you promise me something?” “Hm?”

“I assume now that I’ve told you about my sister,” I said, “You’ll be going to meet her soon, right?”

Alessia raised her eyebrows. “Are you kidding? I’ve got my mate’s name and location — as soon as I get back to my pack and tell them what’s going on, my ass is on the first flight to Washington.”

“Okay, good,” I said, “You already know I can’t go back to my dad’s side of the family — not for a little while. And on the off-chance that Griffin comes looking for me there, I can’t let them know

where I’m goin,

ut I don’t want them to worry either. I want them to know I’m safe.”

“Let me guess,” Alessia rolled her eyes, “You want me to relay the message when I go to meet your sister? That you’re safe and not dead and dying in a ditch somewhere.”

“Yes, exactly.” She scoffed. “Fine. But just for the record, you’re on the run from the most dangerous werewolf in the world, Clarke. I wouldn’t exactly classify you as ‘safe.’” (1