

# The Alpha King’s Human Mate by HC Dolores

## Chapter 72

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“Night is when fear comes to us at its fullest, when we have no way to fight it. It will do everything it can to seep inside you. Sometimes it may succeed.”

Samantha Shannon

Ivan’s valerian root tea trick seemed to only be a temporary bandaid. It worked for a week, but eventually, the nightmares returned — even with the tea.

I found myself in the middle of a dark forest surrounded by wolves on all sides. None of them looked at me or reacted to my presence ~ as if I wasn’t even there. They were circled around something, staring ahead with bloodthirsty eyes.

I didn’t think twice about pushing my way through the circle to see what they were staring at, and when I did, I gasped.

Griffin had been pushed to his knees, blood running down his face and his clothes, He was clutching his side too ~ no doubt another wound. The worst part wasn’t the physical wounds I saw on him though. It was the broken look in his eyes like he’d already lost the fight.

Standing above him, Alpha Liam looked even more menacing than Ir Chapter 72

remembered from the meeting. His face was painted with a victorious smirk and he loomed over Griffin looking every bit like the conqueror he was.

J tried to move, to rush to Griffin’s aid, but I found that my feet wouldn’t move. They were planted into the soil.

I could only watch in horror as Alpha Liam smiled and sliced his claws along Griffin’s throat in one fluid movement. Griffin’s eyes rolled back and he slumped forward, clutching and grabbing at his slit throat.

I opened my mouth to scream, but nothing came out. And that’s when I woke up.

The first thing I registered — besides the darkness of the room - was my own heart beating wildly in my chest.

That wasn’t real. That wasn’t real.

I tried to picture Griffin’s face alive and happy in my mind, but all I could see was the version bleeding out on the forest floor.

My entire body had broken out in a cold sweat, and the comforter suddenly felt suffocating. I flipped it off my body, leaning over the side of the bed.

That wasn’t real. Chapter 72

I knew that the nightmare was just an illusion, a deep-seated fear that my brain plucked from somewhere deep inside. Ivan had said as much ~ that the mate bond did this to force the mated pair back together.

But that knowledge didn’t make it any less terrifying.

There was a tiny part of me that wondered if it was real. If the mate bond could give me nightmares, why couldn’t it give me visions of the present? Maybe this was the bond’s way of alerting me that something was seriously wrong, that Griffin’s trip had ended in some violent, bloody way.

No, Ivan said he experienced dreams like this too. It’s not real, and even if it was, you would know. If Griffin really was dead, I’d feel it. There would be no question.

And then I felt it.

A warm, fuzzy feeling bubbled up inside of me, right in the middle of my chest. It was if someone had injected me with a sedative or a narcotic ~ everything just suddenly felt fine.

I shed all the anxiety and the unease and let the warmth roll over me like a soft coat.

What is this?

‘Whatever it was, it wasn’t me. The new emotions were too strong and felt too foreign to be mine. Chapter 72 Is this a bond thing? Are these Griffin’s emotions? The fuzziness really did feel like a sedative, and after a few moments, I

felt the warmth lulling me back to sleep. This time, into a dreamless one. ]°

When I met Ivan for our training session the next day, the first thing I did was ask him about the warm, fuzzy feelings I’d gotten after the nightmare. Maybe it was our previous conversation we’d had, but Ivan had begun to feel like my go-to person for questions about the mate bond.

“It felt ‘warm and fuzzy?’” Ivan asked me with raised eyebrows. “Pretty much.”

“Could you pick more unhelpful descriptors? What exactly is a ‘fuzzy’ emotion?” he snapped. (\*)

I rolled my eyes. “Fuzzy as in, like, the anxiety seemed to melt away. I felt fine all of the sudden - even to the point where I was able to fall

back asleep. Kind of like that buzz you get after a couple of glasses of

wine. ] just felt mellow.”

“And this came directly after the nightmare?”

I explained to him how I’d woken up feeling so anxious I’d even begun Chapter 72 to question whether Griffin was alive.

As soon as I said that, Ivan’s eyes lit up with recognition. “Ah, yes,” he said, “I understand what happened now.”

“And what happened exactly?” “You opened up the bond.” “I opened up the bond?”

“They never taught you about this in school? Didn’t you get a werewolf education?”

“Apparently not a very good one,” I shrugged.

Ivan sighed, pinching the bridge of his nose as he started to talk. “Think of the mate bond like a hallway with two closed doors. You’re behind one closed door, the King is behind the other. Most of the time, those doors stay shut. The more that a mate bond matures, however, it’s possible to open those doors from time to time. It’s usually in times of high stress or heightened emotions. I’m sure that the anxiety you felt last night is what triggered it. You temporarily opened the King’s door.”

My eyebrows shot to my hairline. “So...the warm, fuzzy feelings. Was I feeling Griffin’s emotions?”

“Not exactly,” Ivan shook his head, “You were feeling his part of the bond. The mate bond is the strongest bond someone can have, and as Chapter 72

you described it, ‘warm and fuzzy.’ What you felt was the connection between you too, which is strong and growing despite the distance. Had something actually been wrong with your mate, you would’ve felt that too.”

“]...didn’t realize I could do that.”

“Neither did I. I’d assume it’s harder for humans to accomplish than. wolves. You don’t feel the bond as much as a normal wolf would.” +)

“So, does this mean I could just tap into our connection whenever I want? Like if I have another nightmare?”

“Not likely,” Ivan replied, “As I said, it’s difficult to trigger the mate bond like that. I’d be surprised if you could do it again, at least not without feeling some very heightened emotions.”

I nodded, trying to soak in everything he told me. Lately, it had begun to feel like I learned new things about the mate bond every day. These were things I’d never been told growing up and I wasn’t sure if that was because I was human or if these were just the kind of things you had to experience for yourself to understand them.

“Now that you’ve used me as your personal encyclopedia,” Ivan said, clapping his hands together, “Are you finally ready for the actual lesson today?”