

The Alpha King's Human Mate by HC Dolores

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"a dysfunctional family is any family with more than one person in it." Mary Karr (2)

Having your parents meet your boyfriend for the first time was stressful enough. Add in werewolves, an Alpha dad, and a royal boyfriend...well, it didn't get any better.

When I had run away to my moms house, I'd learned that Griffin went to my father's pack house to inquire about my whereabouts. Several of the pack warriors had been dumbstruck by the unannounced presence - and the visit quickly got back to my dad, who'd been out at the time.

He'd been furious, of course. Not only to learn that I'd embarrassed his pack by "running away from my obligations," but by missing a major shot to meet Griffin and build alliances.

Secretly, I wondered if that was part of the reason he'd even come tonight — not to celebrate me or see the daughter who no longer lived with him, but to form an alliance with the new King.

As he scrambled to pull himself together in front of Griffin, it certainly seemed that way. "Your Majesty," he said, erasing the anger from his face, "It's an honor to meet you in person. You have no idea how regretful I am that I missed you the day that you came to visit my Chapter 81

pack."

You mean when he was hunting me down and wanted to grill you for information about my whereabouts, | added silently.

I wanted to roll my eyes at the way that my father's mood shifted so suddenly. Only moments ago, he'd been ready to lecture me about my behavior like a child, but with Griffin here now, he was nothing but a respectful subject.

Thankfully, Griffin didn't seem to buy my dad's act either. "I did not visit your pack to see you, Marcus," he said, his face blank, "I was only there for your daughter. My mate."

His flat tone didn't seem to deter my father.

"Yes, I do apologize for her actions," dad said, "Running away like that...that's not the kind of behavior I instilled in my daughter."

I scoffed, drawing the attention of the group. Was he serious? Apologizing for me to Griffin like I was an errant child?

"Are you serious right now?" I asked.

Dad narrowed his eyes, and I could tell he was trying to keep his cool in front of Griffin.

"Clark -"

"No, you don't get to stand here and put on this act," I said, "I'm not Chapter 81

twelve years old anymore. I'm an adult, and if you can't treat me as such and be happy for me, you can leave." (>)

The words came easier than I expected them too. I wasn't sure if that was because they'd been a long time coming or Griffin's comforting hand rested on my back.

Dad was silent for a minute, just staring at me like he was trying to figure out his next move. His eyes glanced between me and Griffin, and finally, he said, "I'm going to go check on Grace." With another fleeting look, he disappeared into the crowd, leaving just me, Griffin, mom, and Steve. (1)

I let out a sigh of relief as I watched him go. I knew better than to expect an apology from my father, but if nothing else, he hadn't continued to try and disrespect me.

"Well, you must be my daughter's boyfriend," Mom suddenly chimed, turning to face Griffin with a large smile. "Or is mate the correct term? I'm not used the werewolf terminology." Now that dad was gone, both her and Steve seemed more comfortable too.

She held her hand out and Griffin shook it lightly, returning her smile. "Either one is fine," he said, "You must be Clark's mom."

"That's me."

Steve wasted no time introducing himself either. "I'm Steve," he said, "I've known Clark's mom for a long time and Clark as well." Chapter 81

It felt almost surreal to watch this interaction happen like I was watching two world merge. The human one and the werewolf one.

"Clark has mentioned you, both of you," Griffin said, "I'm glad to finally meet you."

"Me too," mom replied, "It's a shame we didn't meet the first time... when you came to California." Her tone was light and teasing, but there was still an edge to her voice. Even if she accepted Griffin as my mate, there was no denying the rocky start when he traveled to Yorba Linda to drag me back. (?)

"Right," Griffin said, and he at least looked a little sheepish. Good. I hid my amused smile.

"My King," a new voice said, and | turned to see another Alpha approaching us, "May I have a moment of your time to discuss the dispute about my pack borders?"

Griffin sighed and I realized that this was becoming a trend. This may have been a party, but it was essentially a political event too. He still had to do his part as King - as much as it sucked to spend the majority of the night without him.

He kissed my forehead, bidding my mom and Steve goodbye before joining the Alpha.

"Well, he's a busy one, isn't he?" Mom asked as soon as he was out of earshot. Chapter 81 "Yeah, it comes with the job description I'm learning." "Well, it sounds like it won't be long before you're in the same boat."

she said, "Give it a few years, let people become comfortable, and they'll be grappling for your attention at every party you attend. "

I cracked a smile. "Maybe. Not sure I'd mind that."

I took a look around the room. It felt even more crowded than before with castle staff coming around with drinks and finger food as well as guards stationed at every exit.

The room was hot enough to leave my skin sticky too - or maybe that was just all the thick fabric weighing me down.

"| think I need a little bit of fresh air," I said, "Just a lot of people. I'll be right back."

Mom and Steve nodded, and this time, I was the one disappearing into the crowd. At least it wasn't to avoid an awkward conversation like my dad or Grace.

As I navigated through the throngs of people, someone's arm brushed against mine. I tried to keep on moving, but their fingers latched onto

my wrist.

"I know you're Queen and all, but you're too good to say 'hi' now?"

I recognized that voice. Chapter 81

I whipped my head around, my face breaking out into another smile. "Lily," I said, and then I was enveloping my sister into a hug, "I didn't even know you were here."

"You think I'd miss my own sister's coronation? That's kind of a big deal. Pretty sure this makes you the most successful one in the family now," Lily said. | pulled back from the embrace and examined her.

She was wearing a blue cocktail dress that matched her eyes and she'd curled her blonde hair into long ringlets. Although she wore her signature scowl, her eyes were soft.

"You look good," she said, looking me over, "I mean, I was a little afraid you'd show up to your own coronation in something ugly, but...you look good." (2)

I rolled my eyes, Even in all the change that had taken place recently, Lily hadn't changed much. That was good.

"You don't look so bad yourself," I said. "Is Seb here too?"

She shook her head. "No, he wanted to come but dad made him stay behind to watch over the pack."

I wasn't surprised to hear that, but it would've been nice to see my brother.

Guess I'll have to make a separate trip home to see him at some point. Chapter 81

"I gotta say," Lily continued, "You've surprised me a little bit, sis." I raised my eyebrows. "Oh? And how's that?"

"Well, it wasn't that long ago that you were sitting in a room with Seb and I, begging us to help you find a way out of this," she said. "Now you're getting crowned Queen. Willingly."

I shrugged and smiled, thinking about the similar conversation I'd had with my mother earlier today. Even though it had only been a couple of months, the day I met Griffin felt like it had been ages ago. My life had changed so much then. I'd changed so much since then.

And for the better I think.

"To be fair," I said, "I did try the whole running away thing. Didn't really work out for me."

"Oh, trust me, I'm aware," a new voice piped up. I grinned. Alessia.

She came up behind Lily, wrapping her arms around her waist. Much like my sister, Alessia was all dressed up for the coronation too. Decked out in a red dress with spaghetti straps, the four-inch heels she wore made her even taller.

"I guess I shouldn't be surprised to see you here," I said, "It's good to see you, Alessia." Chapter 81

She wore her signature smirk too, but there was something different about her - and Lily too. Both of them had a light in their eyes 'd never seen before, and they practically glowed in each other's presence. No doubt a side effect of the mate bond.

I wonder if that's how people see Griffin and I.

"Well, I couldn't miss the coronation of someone whose basically my sister-in-law," Alessia said.

"T guess that's true. You guys look happy," I said.

The two glanced at each other with matching smiles. When she looked at Lily, I couldn't help but notice that Alessia didn't smirk, she actually smiled.

"We are," Lily answered, "As pissed as I was that you didn't give me a heads up about Alessia coming my way, it was a good surprise...I don't think I've ever been this happy in my life."

I remembered how anxious Lily was about meeting her mate, but

looking at her, none of that stress remained. "Yeah, me either," Alessia said, pecking Lily on the forehead. "Meeting you was definitely worth aiding your sister in her failed escape

attempt."

I rolled my eyes but didn't comment. Chapter 81

I spent some time catching up with Lily and Alessia. Much like me,

they'd been going through their own changes. Dad had only been upset

about Lily being mated to a girl for about three seconds, which is about

how much time it took him to realize that Alessia was an Alpha herself.)

He'd tried forming alliances with Alessia's pack, but she hadn't been interested. Instead, Lily moved in with Alessia and became the Luna of her pack. (7)

Still, after about ten minutes, I could feel the suffocation of the crowd returning and I decided to return to my original objective: get some fresh air.)

Tjust need a little time-out.

With a glance back to make sure nobody was coming my way, I slipped out of the reception hall doors. =)