

Chapter 4: You're a Werewolf

"Deep within us — no matter who we are — there lives a feeling of wanting to be lovable, of wanting to be the kind of person that others like to be with. And the greatest thing we can do is to let people know that they are loved and capable of loving."

– Fred Rogers

Recap Previous Chapter

"I'm made of stronger stuff than Estelle was. She was always the more fragile one between the two of us. I'll survive." But the way Maria's voice shook made it clear even she had doubts. She took a deep breath and kept speaking. "Once...once you and our Alpha have gotten everything under control, we will return."

End Recap Previous Chapter

"Only you never managed to get everything under control." The young man who had been lounging in the recliner seat suddenly spoke up harshly...accusingly even. "Instead, my father has died and now you've dragged me all the way here to meet some little girl..." his eyes, shards of ice, gave Rose a once-over as if he had better things to do than be here. Looking back at Thomas, the man began to speak. "...I thought I didn't have a mate. You hid all of this from me. I had a right to know."

Rose who had been indignant over being called a little girl, felt her anger rise.

"You had a right to know?" Rose spoke up sarcastically. "What about me? Didn't I deserve to know the truth about my parents...my mother...my..." her voice choked up as she stared at the stranger claiming to be her father. "...dad..." she ended in disbelief. "Are you really...?"

Thomas nodded, bringing his daughter in for another hug.

"I'm so sorry. I wish I could have told you sooner," Thomas choked over the words, tears spilling out of his eyes. "We...we kept hoping that sooner or later we would catch the culprit! I knew they were watching me...waiting for me to lead them to you. We had no choice, you had to go off-grid. Your aunt was kind enough to leave the pack behind and keep you safe. She was kind enough to even... she gave up being human for you Rose." Thomas said with an aching voice, patting the top of his daughter's head lovingly.

"I'd do it all again in a heartbeat if it meant keeping Rose safe but I am sorry I had to lie to you," Auntie Maria stated as she came over, giving Rose a hug after her father let her go.

"I'm still angry over the lies Auntie Maria," Rose responded shakily, squeezing her aunt in a thankful hug. "But thank you for always being there for me. You're the closest thing I've ever had to a parent. You...you've given me so much love...I..." and her quiet tears seemed to overtake her as she silently thanked her aunt for the sacrifice that she had made to keep her safe.

Then suddenly, Rose pulled back as if struck by lightning.

"Wait...wait...that means...you guys...I'm....we're werewolves?" Rose sputtered in confusion.

"Yes we are," grinned Auntie Maria. "Bet you didn't expect that one huh? But your werewolf gene won't be activated until you're 18. Dr. Danvers is our pack doctor. I always take you for yearly checkups to him. He says when you turn 18 and turn for the first time is when your werewolf genes will be activated. You'll have super strength and super speed too."

"And here I thought you were just athletic," she said appreciatively giving her aunt a once over.

Auntie Maria laughed. "Trust me honey, even by werewolf standards, I'm the least athletic person amongst us. Now Xavier, come here and meet your mate."

Rose's eyes widened as the insolent boy who had previously been so rude to her stood up with an exasperated sigh.

"Mate? You...you.... there's got to be a mistake," Rose said, scrambling for a reasonable explanation.

Xavier raised an eyebrow, looking extremely hot as he did so, as if to say he was in total agreement with Rose.

"I wish," was his lethal reply. "I mean come on.... there's no way she's even 16. Let's just leave her here. She's got a wonderful life here, at least it seems like it to me. Don't turn her world upside down by making her come back with us," Xavier said agitatedly, running a hand through his silky wavy hair.

Rose's eyes widened at Xavier's words.

"You've come to get me?" she asked her father sharply.

Thomas nodded. "Our alpha has died and Xavier is the new alpha of our pack. We need to bring our Luna home so you can begin preparing. You've been gone far too long Rose."

"P...prepare? Prepare for what?" Rose's head was starting to hurt. This was way too much to take in.

"For the mating ceremony," Auntie Maria squealed happily. "Once you turn 18—"

"The what?!" Rose screamed shrilly. There was no way she was going anywhere for mating with anyone.

"Rose...since you've grown up with humans, you're not accustomed to the traditions. Even for me, it was always so foreign whenever I talked with Estelle but you need to give it a chance," Auntie Maria said placating her, looking towards Xavier as if he was going to lose his temper.

For once, Xavier was smiling in relief.

"See Thomas. Let's go. Everyone has a right to choose their mate and—"

"You only say that because you haven't felt the pull of your mate yet Xavier," Thomas stated quietly. "I know you think you're in love with Alyssa—"

"I don't think...I know," Xavier snapped, giving his beta a once-over. Still he spoke again, "Now that I'm Alpha, I think it's time for you to retire and join our Council of Elders. My brother is next in line to be beta of our pack Thomas. You've done your duty well. Let's go home and—"

"Xavier." Thomas spoke firmly, controlling his fear in front of his new Alpha. "I'm taking my daughter home. It's time she came home and started learning about the pack and training with her pack as the future—"

"She isn't the future Luna!" Xavier snapped angrily.

For a first, Rose heartily agreed with something Xavier had said.

"Would you dare to defy the will of the moon goddess?" Auntie Maria whispered. "Ever since the first Alpha and Luna of our pack, it has been decreed that the Luna would be marked. This was so the pack knew who to protect. Within our pack, it is the Luna that gives our Alpha power and keeps him grounded. She is always born on pack soil, and is given the power to converse with the ancestors who have passed on whenever the Alpha is in need of guidance. Without your Luna, you are weak. You will not be able to tap into her latent power. Your pack will lose the strong footing it has only advanced in under the guidance of your father."

"Oh come on! She's part human. You really think she has any latent power in her? We'd be lucky if she could manage to complete a decent turn." Xavier scoffed. "Besides-" he added. "-I want to be able to choose my Luna." Xavier ended hotly. He glared at Rose for a second before asking her, "Can we speak in private?"

Rose nodded mutely and Xavier motioned for her to follow him out into the front lawn of the house. She found Xavier irresistibly attractive like any girl with eyes would. He undeniably exuded power and had the good looks to go with that dominating aura of his. However, that didn't mean Rose wanted to mate him! This was seriously some heavy stuff. Most girls wanted a new car on their 16th birthday, Rose got a mate.

Sighing and trying to ignore the fast beating of her heart, Rose walked meekly behind Xavier wondering what he wanted to talk about.