

The Alpha King’s Human Mate by HC Dolores

Chapter 48

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“Having perfected our disguise, we spend our lives searching for someone we don’t fool.”

- Robert Brault

When I told Griffin that I wanted to go on a date, I hadn’t expected him to work so quickly. But I guess he had latched onto the idea and wanted to make things happen as quickly as possible. And he did.

Griffin insisted that I get ready immediately and he’d back within the hour to “pick me up.” Before I’d had time to protest, he was out the door and I was back in an empty bedroom—again. While part of me felt all too nervous to spend the night with Griffin, my grumbling stomach wasn’t complaining. Getting drugged, dragged across the continent, and fed painkillers wasn’t easy on the stomach. I was more than ready for a little sustenance. |*

For a moment, | stood dumbfounded in the room. How did Griffin expect me to “get ready”? I had none of my things.

You have none of your things from home but there is a gigantic closet full of clothes in your size, my brain reminded me. (7

Before I could begin sorting through the mess, there was a knock on the door. Don’t tell me that’s Dr. Inessa again. I don’t think I can handle another surprise visitor today. That feels like all I do. Sit in this bedroom and wait for people to knock on the door.

“Who is it?” I asked.

“My name is Mary, Your Majesty,” a soft feminine voice spoke from the other side of the door, “His Majesty mind linked me and asked that I help you prepare for the evening with anything you may need.”

Hearing people call me “Majesty,” being waited on...it was all so new. Part of me wanted to outright reject Mary and tell her I’d be fine, but I stopped myself.

You’re accepting the mate bond and everything that comes with it, remember, Clark? Having someone wait on you is “everything that comes with it. Besides, having a second opinion on an outfit might not be the worst thing in the world.

“Sure, come in,” I called back. ‘As soon as I gave the go-ahead, Mary entered the room, head bowed. She was nothing more than a little slip of a girl and she couldn’t have

been much older than me. Although she kept her head bowed, I could make out bright green eyes from across the room.

Is every werewolf in the world just exceptionally beautiful?

Mary kept her gaze on the floor and stood silently like she was waiting for instructions. “Well, hi,” I said, scratching my neck awkwardly, “it’s nice to meet you. I appreciate the help since I’ve got several hours of

jetlag and sleeping pills to get rid of.” If Mary noticed my slide remark about being drugged, she certainly didn’t say anything. |

“I’m honored to help, Your Majesty,” she said, “Would you like me to prepare the bath for you first?” (*

“That actually sounds wonderful. Thanks, Mary.”

Even with her head low, I could see her beam at the praise as she scampered off into the bathroom.

It only took her a few minutes to return and I had to practically beg her to wait in the bathroom while I bathed in Griffin’s ridiculously-sized jacuzzi tub. Mary had insisted on “helping me wash,” but that was just a touch too far for me. I’d need to be ninety-years-old and frail before I’d let another human being bathe me.

Even Griffin? My mind piped up and I couldn’t stop the blush. Where were these thoughts coming from? Was it my new acceptance of the mate bond or just the fact that I was back in his presence after a few weeks away?

I soaked in the bath for around twenty minutes. There was no shortage of room and Mary had used some sort of soothing lavender scent that I couldn’t stop breathing in. It was the first time I’d felt truly relaxed since arriving at the castle. Of course, Mary rapped on the door at the twenty-minute mark to let me know my time was winding down. I stumbled out of the soothing bath, wrapped in a fluffy towel. Mary was waiting for me in the bedroom, a couple of outfits laid out on the bed. Her head was still bowed, not daring to glance at me. *)

T couldn’t ignore it anymore. I knew people were going to refer to me as “Your Majesty,” whether I wanted them to or not but I wasn’t Medusa. I wasn’t going to turn anyone to stone just for looking at me.

“Mary,” I said, and she hummed in reply, “It’s okay to look at me, you know. We can make eye contact. I know you’re trying to be respectful and all, but we’re basically the same age. You don’t need to stare at the ground. Please look at me.”

Mary hesitantly obeyed my request, her green eyes meeting mine for the first time since she’d entered the suite. Just as I’d expected—she, like every other werewolf I’d met, was ethereally beautiful.

I gave her a smile when her eyes met mine and she smiled back. “If you allow it, Your Majesty,” she said, “The castle help is often taught that ‘we’re not allowed to make eye contact with any of the Royals, especially the Queen.”

“Why ‘especially’ the Queen?”

“Because you are for the King’s eyes only,” Mary said like it was the most obvious thing in the world. (2 Great. More possessive werewolf etiquette that I had no idea about and I definitely will not be abiding by.)

“Well, that’s kind of dumb,” I replied, “Everyone can see. Unless the King is going to keep me locked in this bedroom all the time, I’m not just for ‘his’ eyes.” As soon as the words were out my mouth, I almost regretted them. The last thing I needed was to give Griffin more ideas.

I walked closer to the bed and examined the three outfits that Mary had laid out for me. They were all dresses. There was a blue, form-fitting dress, a black one with spaghetti straps, and a mint green number with straps that fell below the shoulders.

“I hope you don’t mind, Your Majesty,” Mary cut in, “But the King instructed that you only wear a dress tonight. I thought these might be a few good options.” I nearly rolled my eyes at that—of course Griffin wanted me in a dress.

“No, that’s okay,” I said. “I’m not sure which one...they’re all pretty.”

“If you don’t mind me saying,” Mary interjected, “But the blue would go beautifully with your hair and your eyes. The color would bring out your skin tone too.” Mary’s voice got soft and low at the end, like she was embarrassed of her own opinion.

“No, I think you’re right,” I said, eyeing the blue dress, “I like that one. I’ll wear that.” I could see Mary’s beaming smile from the corner of my eyes, (2 “Would you like me to do your hair and makeup, Your Grace?” (7

“Yes, please. I’m pretty hopeless at anything that’s not a ponytail or

mascara.”

I settled into the chair in front of the vanity as Mary gathered an impressive supply of makeup and hair care products. I guess I shouldn’t have been surprised that Griffin had even supplied makeup and hair stuff, but I was. The man had thought of everything—like he was ensuring there would never be a reason for me to leave. ‘)

“Your hair is so beautiful,” Mary murmured as she brushed through. She was a lot gentler than I ever was with my hair, and surprisingly, it didn’t turn frizzy and chaotic under her touch. For once, my hair seemed to obey.

“Thank you.”

“You must feel so special,” Mary continued, “To be the King’s mate. That is an honor that every young female werewolf wishes, even those with ranks like mine.” I wasn’t quite sure what to say to that. I knew Mary was right, but it was odd to hear how about how “lucky” I must be to have an honor I didn’t even want. I didn’t feel special. | felt incredibly misplaced.

I didn’t bother saying all of that to Mary though. Instead, I just nodded and tried to muster up a smile that didn’t look so awkward.

I expected the conversation to end there but Mary continued. “I’m glad you’re here now. I won’t have to hear the other castle girls gossip about the King any longer. It becomes very tedious very quickly.”

“Gossip about the King?”

“There are some girls in the castle,” Mary explained, “That think they’re special. Like you. They know they aren’t the King’s mate, but if he showed them just a night of attention, they would begin to daydream. They’d brag that the King likes them and they may be the next Queen.”

I didn’t need to be a rocket scientist to read in-between the lines. A “night of attention” from Griffin was a one-night-stand, and he’d clearly had plenty of them with the “castle girls.” I wasn’t sure why that made me upset—I knew that Griffin was no virgin before me—but I still felt jealousy bubbling in my chest. It was one thing to know it and another to hear about it.

And to think he was all over my case about Aiden. Meanwhile, he was just whoring himself around the castle. Where does he get off being jealous about one guy I made out with a few times while he was making his way through the castle?

Mary must’ve picked up on my sour mood because she immediately tried to backtrack. “I’m so sorry, Your Majesty,” she said, eyes wide and cheeks flushed, “I did not mean to upset you...I spoke out of turn. I forgot myself. I should not have been discussing your mate’s, or my King’s, past...ventures like that.” “You can be honest with me,” I told her, jealousy still bubbling beneath the surface. Part of me knew I should just change the subject but now that she’d opened this can of worms, I wanted to know. “Was he...popular with the castle girls?”

She hesitated. “Just a few,” Mary said, lowering her gaze, “Only a few that I know of. Most of his ventures that I heard about were with pretty diplomats and ambassadors that visited the castle. Or that’s what the gossip was—I’m so sorry, Your Majesty. It was not my place to talk about this.” She continued to stammer out apologies as she fixed my hair and makeup but they fell on deaf ears.

As much as I wanted to pretend that I was above jealousy, especially past jealousy, I couldn’t stop picturing Griffin with other women. Ethereally beautiful women like Mary. One thing was for sure—I was starting this date out in a sour mood.