

Alice, My Only Love

Author: Frosted Cabbage

Chapter 1

The day after our engagement was finalized, the Shadow Wolves celebrated the annual Full Moon Festival—a grand event for the pack.

Moonlight bathed the stage, which served as the heart of the celebration. At its center was a massive stone altar holding ceremonial goblets and offerings dedicated to the Moon Goddess. Behind the stage loomed a towering Ferris wheel, its lights twinkling against the night sky.

In one corner of the festival grounds, Ryan Trivett leaned casually against an ancient tree, a silver goblet in hand. He was boasting to his friends about his latest hunting exploits.

The moment I stepped into the bustling festival, his friend, Blake Glisson, was the first to notice me.

"Hey, Ryan, your little shadow is here again," Blake said with a grin, his teasing tone drawing laughter from the nearby wolves.

"You guys are engaged already, and she's still trailing after you like a pup!" someone else chimed in.

Ryan turned his head and spotted me, a flash of irritation crossing his face.

"Alice, are you so desperate to get married?" he said coldly, his voice dripping with contempt. "You went ahead and got our families to finalize the engagement without even asking me. Now the whole pack knows we're supposed to get married. Really, great job!"

His scornful words stung, but I quickly steadied myself, lifting my chin to meet his golden gaze.

"Ryan, I didn't need your permission," I said firmly, my voice steady. "Because I'm not marrying you."

The crowd fell silent for a moment before erupting into laughter.

Blake laughed the hardest, doubling over as if he couldn't breathe. "Ryan, you'd better sweet-talk your little fiancée before she pulls another stunt to get your attention!"

Ryan's expression darkened, his eyes narrowing as he stared me down. His voice dropped, laced with barely restrained anger.

"Alice, what is this? Some new tactic to play hard to get?" he hissed. "If you're marrying into my family, who else could you marry but me? And don't forget—you've been saying you'd marry me since you were a kid. The entire pack already considers you mine."

He stepped closer, leaning in until his breath brushed my ear. His voice dropped to a dangerous whisper, carrying the threat of a predator.

"As for the wedding, I can give you the grand ceremony you've always wanted. But the mate bond? That's reserved for the one who's truly mine."

I stared at him in shock. In my past life, Ryan had obediently followed the family's arrangements. We had completed the mate bonding ritual and gotten married without a hitch.

Could it be... he had also been reborn?

Before I could press him further, a familiar figure appeared at the entrance to the festival.

It was my cousin, Willow Hawkins.

She was dressed in a pale blue gown, her eyes rimmed with red as tears threatened to spill. The moment she saw Ryan and me standing together, her tears broke free, sliding down her cheeks.

"Alice, Ryan..." she whispered, her voice trembling and barely audible. "I heard... you're getting married soon. I don't have any money to buy Alice the expensive gifts she deserves, so... I just want to wish you both happiness..."

Before she could finish, she turned and ran toward the river, tears streaming down her face.

"Look at what you've done!" Ryan snapped, spinning to glare at me. His golden eyes blazed with fury.

Without another word, he turned and chased after her, leaving me standing there alone.