

The Ivory Queen by StephanieLight Chapter 2

2. Mates I

*** Aurora's POV***

Mate.

My eyes are fixated on Oliver. A smile tugs at my lips as I take him all in. He stands over 6 feet tall and was extremely well built, his strong, toned muscles visible through his suit. His soft brown hair is combed up in a stylish quiff and he has dimples! But his best feature by far are his deep blue eyes, almost violet in color.

My mate! I was practically shaking with excitement. *My mate is perfect.* I send a quick thank you to Moon Goddess.

My excitement is short lived, however, when his gaze turns cold and his eyes fill with anger and disgust. I feel a shiver run down my spine but I can't look away.

Finally, he breaks our connection and begins speaking to the audience and announcing the names of the graduates from his pack. Once the ceremony is complete, the crowd disperses throughout the yard while loud music blasts through the speakers. Before I know it, the party is in full swing.

I serve several beverages for pack members, all the while searching for those deep blue eyes. My search is abruptly ended when I feel someone grab my arm and yank me towards the woods. I try to pull myself free, but then realize it's Oliver dragging me. I immediately stop fighting and allow him to take me away.

My wolf is practically purring. *Mine! Mine!*

My gut, however, senses something is extremely wrong. I could feel his anger radiating off him.

Once we reach the edge of the forest and are far enough away from the crowd, he stops walking and throws me hard against a small tree. I feel the air get knocked out of my lungs and my wolf whimpers softly. I gasp for air, unsure of what just happened.

"Of course my mate had to be you," he mumbles to himself. He looks up at the night sky, as if he's speaking to Moon Goddess herself. "This has to be a joke. My mate is supposed to be this incredible, beautiful girl, not some ugly f*****g murderer." He stops to look at me. "How could I possibly love you?"

"No, I didn't do it! You're my mate, you have to believe me! You-"

“Listen to me. You and I can’t happen. I, Olivier Honoré Artaud, Alpha of the River Moon Pack, reject -”

“No! Please don’t do-”

I feel a hard slap on my face, splitting my lip. My eyes instantly fill with tears and a sob builds up in my throat. I force myself to look him in the eyes and see an overwhelming sadness temporarily peak through them.

Why is he doing this if it’s clearly hurting him too?

“Don’t make this harder than it has be,” he says, his eyes darkening into emotionless pools of deep blue. “I, Olivier Honoré Artaud, Alpha of the River Moon Pack, reject you, Aurora Montenegro of the Lluvia Blanca pack, as my mate and future Luna.” He turns around and walks away without so much as a second glance.

The pain is unbearable. It feels like a thousand knives stabbing into my chest, slowing and meticulously making new incisions and my skin is practically on fire. I s****m and writhe in pain on the forest floor and my wolf can’t stop howling. I sob for what seems like an hour before the pain finally wears off and I pick myself up off the floor. I wipe the tears and dirt off my face, picking leaves and twigs out of my braid before pulling my hair back into a bun. I walk solemnly back to the party and stand at my station, completely devoid of all emotion.

For the next several hours, I mindlessly serve drinks, hanging my head low and never once reacting to the cruel comments made by pack members on my appearance. I know I looked like s**t.

My abdomen abruptly bursts into excruciating pain and I quickly attempt to stifle my s****m into my arm. I look up to see Erin rubbing herself against Oliver on the dance floor. His eyes look lifeless as she turns around to kiss his lips. She wraps her arms around his neck, but he remains stiff and unmoving. Our eyes meet.

Please stop, I beg with a pleading look.

I feel Reyna going crazy, growling viciously at Erin. A flash of pain flickers in his eyes and he stops, pushing Erin away and turning to leave. It doesn’t matter though, I still see the tears clinging to the rims of his eyes. I know he’s hurting too.

Emotionally exhausted, I start running back to the pack house, not caring about the punishment I would be receiving for leaving my station. Once inside, I lock myself in the basement and throw myself into bed. I grab a pillow and s****m over and over again until my throat burns. I don’t know when I finally fall asleep.

The sound of my alarm going off at 5 a.m wakes me up.

Another day of misery.

I get up, shower and begin getting ready for my long day of chores. I stare at my reflection in the mirror, inspecting my slightly swollen cheek and the ugly black and blue bruise Oliver gave me. The cut on my lip has sealed with dried blood. I change into a t-shirt and jeans and pull my hair into a ponytail.

I head to the kitchen and start helping the cook, Maira, make breakfast for the pack. She's the only person in the pack who somewhat tolerates my presence. At around 8 am, pack members start rolling in, demanding their food. I silently serve them one by one, until only a measly pancake and sausage are left for me to eat. Maira then goes off to finish her other duties and leaves me to clean the kitchen and dishes.

"A donde te fuiste anoche {where did you go last night}?" my mom snaps as she brings back her plate.

Here we go.

"Nowhere," I respond, looking down at my feet. "I wasn't feeling well and I didn't want to get anybody sick, so I came back here," I lie.

"Mentirosa! {Liar}! She was whoring around. I saw her sneak back to the party after leaving with a guy in the woods," sneers Chava. "She was covered in dirt and leaves when she came back."

"Is that true?" my mother asks, her face red with anger.

"No, I didn't-

"Eres una maldita puta! {You're a f*****g slut!}," my mom curses as she swings her hand across my face. Before the sting could properly register, I receive another slap on the other side of my face. And then another, and another, until I am on the floor, begging her to stop.

"Mami, no por favor! (Mom no please!)" I cry out as more slaps rain down on me.

When she is finally exhausted, she stops and smooths her clothes. She then orders me to clean the amphitheater before storming off.

Salvador just stares at me, a huge evil grin plastered on his face. He spits on my face before turning around and leaving. I stay on the ground curled up in a ball, crying for a few minutes before getting up and heading to the bathroom to examine the damage. Aside from a bloody nose, a busted lip, and a swollen, bruised face, I'd say I got off pretty easy.

I clean up my blood and grab an ice pack for my face from the kitchen. After a few minutes, I resume my kitchen chores then head out to the amphitheater.

Confetti, party poppers, and glow sticks litter the amphitheater and rose garden and I grab some trash bags to clean up the mess. I pluck balloons off the pillars, popping them individually with a pen. After a while, I actually start to enjoy myself, completely immersed in my simple task and temporarily forgetting the cruelty of my existence. That's probably why I didn't hear him come up behind me.

"Well, well, well. Look who we have here."