

Chapter 4: Mate

Landon's POV

We nally arrived in the parking lot at the bar, much to Rob's annoyance, because we hit some unexpected trac on our way from an overturned tractor-trailer. It wasn't anything we could control, but that didn't stop him from getting angry and punching the steering wheel. The time on the clock said 10:40, and he kept saying how all the hot girls would be taken.

Growing up was something Rob needed to do. At thirty, he was more concerned about going out and meeting women than his Beta duties. I had considered demoting him many times, but that would upend our long-standing tradition of choosing ranked members. It had been my hope I would be able to help him under my guidance. That didn't seem to be working in my favor. He parked the car, and we joined the surprisingly long line to get into the club for how late it was.

"I would have thought everyone would have been inside by now," I commented.

"Some people skip the karaoke and just come when the DJ starts," he told me.

It took a few minutes to get through the line, but nally, we got past the bouncer. Taking one look at us, he didn't even ask for our IDs. They usually didn't. I knew our Alpha and Beta aura was intimidating to most humans, so people didn't seem to want to upset us in any way. They might not have known what we were, but they could tell something was different about us.

Once we had walked into the club, all I could hear was loud music and singing. It didn't sound like the DJ, so looking over at the source, I saw the sight of two women on stage singing happily together. One had long black hair pulled behind her ears as she closed her green eyes to try and belt out a high note; the other caught my attention as I gazed into her beautiful blue eyes. My breath caught in my throat as Ezra purred a single word that I couldn't help from escaping my lips,

"Mate!" The ve-foot-ve gorgeous woman on the stage was my mate; I knew it just by the look of her; there was just one problem: she was a human.

"Landon, did you just say mate?" Rob asked, following my gaze so his eyes landed on the same woman I was staring at.

"Landon, she's our mate!" Ezra said excitedly, eyes locked on the woman belting into the microphone.

"I know, but she's a human," I told him, not dropping my gaze.

"What's your point?" he asked, irritated that I had yet to move from the spot I was in.

"Are you talking about the blonde girl on the stage?" Rob asked with confusion. "How is that possible? She's a human?" Our pack had a long-standing tradition where all Alphas had been mated to strong she-wolves. Usually, it was another Alpha or even an elder's child. In the many centuries of our pack, not one Alpha has been mated to a human. No Beta or Gamma had been mated to a human, either.

"I know," I told Rob, still unable to take my eyes off this fantastic woman before me. She raised her arms over her head, and her green tank top slid up, revealing her midriff and what looked like a rib tattoo. Ezra purred again seductively as he watched her with drool hanging from his mouth. The music faded out, and the crowd began to applaud the woman. They rushed off the stage laughing, arm in arm. They walked over to three men, and one of them handed my mate a drink. Ezra growled loudly, rumbling in my chest. He didn't like the way this man was looking at his mate. It seemed like he was undressing her with his eyes.

"We have to go claim her," Ezra demanded, pung his chest out possessively. I didn't respond but continued to watch her movements as the man bent in to whisper in her ear and then placed a hand on her arm. Ezra lost it, pushing to take control and march over to this man who dared touch our mate. Wrestling with him, I won and shoved him to the back of my mind. The last thing we needed was for him to make a scene in the middle of this club. My mind was racing as I tried to decide what to do. My heart and wolf told me to walk over and mark her here and now, but my head knew what that would mean for the pack.

"Landon, man, get a grip!" Rob said, shaking me slightly since I had been standing in the same spot for several minutes. The DJ had taken over now as the low thump of club music led the air. This man took my mate by the hand and began dancing with her. Ezra roared from his cage in my mind, snarling as the man placed his hands on her hips and drew her close to him. Fighting Ezra to keep control of myself was dicult. If he won, he would not stop from doing what he wanted with his newly found mate.

"Landon!" Rob shouted. I pulled my eyes away from my beautiful mate to look at him.

"What?!" I asked, more aggressively than I meant to.

"Let's go get a drink," he told me. With much diculty, I followed him through the crowd, away from my mate and to the bar. Not paying much attention to what Rob ordered, I scanned the crowd again until I found her. She now had her a** pressed into the guy as they danced and smiled. Balling my hands into sts, I fought the urge to punch something. This was ridiculous; we hadn't even spoken yet. I needed to get a hold of myself. Something was being pushed into my arm. I looked down to see Rob trying to hand me a beer.

"Thanks," I replied, taking it from him.

"How can a human be your mate?" he asked, taking a long drink.

"I don't know," I replied, doing the same. The cold liquid steamed the raging re of emotions inside me momentarily.

"You're going to reject her, right?" Rob said in a tone that made me think it had already been decided. I choked on the mouthful of beer, and I shot him an angry look.

"What are you talking about?" I seethed through my teeth, Ezra getting dangerously close to release.

"What do you mean? You know a human can't be the Luna of Crimson Dawn. It goes against centuries of tradition," he told me with narrow eyes. Glaring back at him, Ezra decided to enter his two cents.

"We can't reject her! She's our mate! The Moon Goddess never makes mistakes!" He was looking at me with desperation as he began to whine. I had never heard him complain about anything in all the years he had been with me.

"Well, I'm not going to do anything in this crowded bar," I told him.

"Tell me you're going to reject her!" Rob demanded, staring intensely at me.

"I don't know what I'm going to do. Ezra is begging me not to," I admitted, looking back at the woman who was my mate.

"You can't seriously be considering accepting her?! That's madness!" Rob huffed. I turned to face him and said in a deadly whisper that I knew he could hear, even over the roar of the music.

"You're stepping over the line, Robert. This is my mate, and I'll do what I please!" Rob lowered his head, submitting to my Alpha aura.

"Yes, Alpha," he responded with diculty. Rob had always had a problem respecting my decisions, especially as the Beta; he wanted more control. Hung out as much anger as I could, I took another sip of my drink, contemplating what to do.

"We should go talk to her," Ezra suggested. "Get that disgusting man away from her!" He almost vibrated with rage the longer we looked at the two dancing. Our mate turned and said something to the guy she was dancing with; he nodded and took her hand, starting to lead her through the crowd. Though I didn't mean for it to happen, I found my feet carrying me after them.

"Where are you going?" Rob asked as I handed my beer to him and left him where he stood. Ignoring him, I watched the backs of their heads as they weaved in and out of people.

The man was leading her outside, and I wasn't sure why. My senses were on high alert as I followed at a safe distance. He took her down the front steps and then continued around the side of the building. It didn't look like my mate had that much to drink, but I could also sense a strange anxiousness coming from her. Their voices were carrying from around the building, and my heart jumped into my throat when I heard her speak for the rst time. It played like the melody to a love song, making my stomach ip, and my breath catches in my throat. One thing pulled me from my strange haze.

"Ouch, stop! You're hurting me!" Ezra perked up, hackles raising as he growled and bared his teeth.

"He's hurting our mate!" he snarled, saliva ying from his mouth. He didn't need to tell me what to do next. Instinct took over as the primal need to protect my mate washed over me. I had been trying not to get involved with what they were doing, instead standing just around the corner from where they were, but now I stomped around the side of the building with sts and teeth clenched.

This a**hole had our mate up against the wall and was attempting to have his way with her despite her yelling no and for him to stop. She was struggling under the weight of him, and tried kneeling him in the balls. Approaching quickly, I placed both my hands on the back of his shirt and yanked him off, ingoaching himself several feet away from us. He landed on his a**, falling back onto his hands.

"Landon, come back inside!" Rob yelled in my head.

"No, he's hurting her!" I yelled back, shutting off my mind to him.

"What the fu*k!" the guy yelled, suddenly nding himself on the ground in the blink of an eye. This was the rst time I was this close to her, and I could now smell in a scent clearly instead of muddled with sweat, alcohol, and other people. I was taking her lung full through my nose. Ezra purred as her sweet wildower aroma punched me in the face. My brown eyes nally met her blue ones, and I knew she could feel the mate bond because she gasped and opened her mouth slightly. The blue of her eyes sparkled in the moonlight, and Ezra was dancing, wanting nothing more than for me to wrap my arms around her and bring her close.

None of that could happen because my ears caught the sound of this man approaching. I found it comical that he thought he could take on an Alpha wolf who was at least a foot taller than him. He grabbed me by the shoulder and tried to turn me to face him. Doing what he wanted, he soon realized that was a mistake as I balled up my st, drew it back, and punched him square in the nose. The force was so great he stumbled back, clutching his face, as blood poured from between his ngers.

"The fu*k is wrong with you?" he howled in a gurgling rage as blood lled his mouth.

"I believe she said no," I hissed at him, glaring intensely. He glared back at me as the blood began to drip onto the concrete beneath him. It looked like he was sucking up the situation to see if it was worth it.

"Fu*k this, and fu*k you!" he sputtered, turning and walking away to Goddess only knows where. Now that he was gone, I could focus my attention on my mate and the anxious, confused feeling coming from her. As a focus human, the mate bond be a very feelinging thing. They went from feeling normal feelings to being overcome with an intense feeling of love, desire, and need to be with someone they had just met. It wasn't as intense as it was for me, but it was still there. When I turned back to face her, I saw her blue eyes wide with shock and her face drained of all color.

"Are you alright?" I asked, getting closer. She sucked in another breath, probably taking in the intense scent I was giving off to her. "Are you alright?" I asked again when she didn't respond and just continued to look at me. Blinking a couple of times, she seemed to come to her senses.

"Yes, I'm okay. Thank you." Ezra's legs gave out, hearing her speak to us, and he collapsed on the ground, panting. For a temperamental Alpha wolf, he sure was a puddle of mush for this tiny woman.

"Quinn!!!" A woman's voice was shouting from nearby. "QUINN!!!" Looking to my left, I saw the gure of the other woman from the stage my mate had been singing with. Her long black curls swung back and forth as she whipped her head from side to side. When her eyes landed on us, they went wide as saucers. Quinn had her back still pressed against the cold brick of the building, with me towering over her. The smell of blood also lled the air, even though I could only smell it. This woman's eyes went from wide open to so narrow they were only slits. She began stomping towards us at a breakneck pace. "What the fu*k is going on here?"