

Rejection to Rebirth: A Luna's Vengeance

Chapter 3

Verena

I'm sitting next to Anabella in the backseat of the car as we're on our way to the full moon banquet. Last time we headed this way, I was full of hope and wonder; now the only wonder I'm full of is the hope that I don't stab my sister.

"You're incredibly quiet," she says, snapping me out of my thoughts and I turn to look at her. "Yesterday you wouldn't shut up about it, now you look like you're being forced to go. What's up? You even changed your dress!"

I'm no longer wearing that poofy gown, instead I opted for a little black dress that I went out to buy. My lips are red, I'm wearing heels and I'm feeling confident for a change. If I'm going to play the part of the villain, I might as well look like it.

Oh, I never realised just how angry I always was. Day in and day out seeing Anabella walk around my home as if she owned the place. I can't believe how incredibly stupid I was, hoping a man would eventually choose me.

This time I won't be vulnerable. Screw them all.

"It's just another banquet," I say with a sigh.

"And if we meet our mates? What then?" Anabella asks with a twinkle in her eye while I roll mine.

"Then I guess we finally meet the one the Goddess blessed us with," I say with a fake smile on my face. "Do you think Alpha Lucan has a mate yet?"

The smile immediately slips from her face. "I actually... wouldn't know. But I have heard he's seeing someone he's completely head over heels for."

"Hmm, I wonder what would happen to that when he meets his mate one day," I say, crossing my arms. "Even so-called love isn't as powerful as the Mate Bond. Poor girl, the Alpha will have to kick her to the curb."

I watch her reaction and try not to laugh when it looks like she's about to vomit. Gods, I wonder if she ever thought about it, how it would feel when the person she loves meets the one he's meant to be with.

Then again, it's not like she gave a shit anyway; she continued with her affair even when I was named Lucan's mate.

"Oh, we're here," I say when the car comes to a stop and the driver comes to open the door for us. Anabella is still sour even as we walk up the stone steps of the Crescent Fang banquet hall.

I don't wait around for her. I head straight to the table with the champagne, because what I'm about to do tonight requires loads of liquid courage. I still remember the pull of the Mate Bond; it's damn near potent and makes you too compliant.

Don't get me wrong, I loved Lucan once upon a time. But now all that's left of that love is resentment. Not even a Mate Bond could make him respect me, and I respected myself even less.

Well, it ends tonight. I made plans before coming here and I'm putting them into place as soon as that bond snaps into place. I left a letter with my mother, along with half of my savings, so she should be fine for a while.

I grab a flute of champagne and face the crowd. There are so many familiar faces here, faces who pretended to be friends and allowed the gossip to spread. This pack is filled with more snakes than wolves.

Anabella is rubbing shoulders with Lucan's sister; both of them are rotten to the core. No wonder they get along, and used to be best friends even after I moved into the pack house. Gods, I sound so bitter right now, and I honestly wish I didn't feel this way.

The crowd quietens to a hush, and I down the rest of my champagne before grabbing another one. I know what's about to happen. I can feel it in my gut.

And there he is; just as handsome as the last time I saw him. His brown curls sweeping over his shoulders, that tux tailored to perfection. The only difference is this time I am not swept under the allure. I know the type of man Lucan is, and it is not the one he portrays to the public.

Everyone parts as he walks into the hall, and I roll my eyes. Oh, the power an Alpha wields, but even as I try not to fold, I can't help but lower my head. I can feel him getting closer to the table I'm standing next to, so I take a deep breath and as soon as I look up, our eyes meet.

This is the moment they always tell you about. The perfect moment when you meet your mate and everything falls into place. Your heart beats to his rhythm, you feel that pull in your core and you willingly submit to me.

Funny how resentment seems to feel stronger than the Mate Bond, because I don't feel that indescribable pull. His green eyes widen when he sees me and he seems to be walking towards me as if something was pulling him.

This is odd; I don't feel that anger I felt from him the first time our Mate Bond slid into place.

"Mate!" he roars as he walks toward me and there's an audible gasp from everyone. Murmurs ripple through the crowd at his words, but they all fade away as he walks toward me.

I tear my gaze away from him and look at Anabella, who is wearing a horrified look on her face. When I look back at Lucan, he is staring at me with reverence and my resolve nearly wavers.

Why is he acting so different this time? That look in his eye... that's how he used to look at Anabella! No, I can't let my heart be swayed by this! I know where this road leads, and it is not to a happy marriage!

He comes to a stop in front of me and draws his hand to my cheek, cupping it gently. "Mate," he says, his green eyes flashing crimson as if to stake his claim on me. His scent has always reminded me of a dark forest on a rainy day, and I swear it's even more potent now.

My heart is beating so fast and I'm about to completely fold under his gentle persuasion when I see the slow smirk forming on his face. Ah, there it is; the 'I know I've won' look he always used to wear when he used to tell me not to wait up for him.

That same goddamn smirk he wore after claiming me on our wedding night and then leaving to go to Anabella.

I take a step back from him and he frowns, that smirk dropping. Wow, it feels nice to be able to elicit this reaction from a man who only knows how to control. It's now or never, Verena.

"I, Verena Martelli," I start, my voice stronger than I feel. "Reject you, Alpha Lucan Russo, as my mate and Alpha."

Lucan's hand goes to his heart as he undoubtedly feels out Bond severing the same as I am. It hurts like hell, but I refuse to look away from him. The crimson slips out of his eyes as he looks at me and his frown deepens.

"Why?" he demands with a growl, baring his teeth, and I swear I can feel the anger radiating from him. He grabs my wrist and pulls me hard toward him. "Why would you sever a sacred bond?!"

"Because I would rather commit taboo in the eyes of the Goddess than play second fiddle to your mistress!" I exclaim, pulling my hand from his grasp. "I am no one's fool, much less yours, Alpha Lucan!"

You can cut the tension in the banquet hall with a blunt butter knife as a collective gasp echoes through the hall. Lucan looks at me, then glances behind him at Anabella, who takes a step back and shakes her head.

Ah, things are not so different this time, after all.

I close the small distance between us and lean toward him. "Yes, I know about you and my sister. You can be with her now without the burden of a mate you never wanted," I say, then I step back from him. "Accept the rejection, and we can both go on our merry ways."

He is livid, but even more so, he is humiliated. But he has to accept the rejection or neither of us can move on; we will always pine for each other even if we hate one another. He doesn't want me. He never did, so why is he taking so long?

A deep chuckle rumbles in his chest as his gaze lifts to me, no longer flashing crimson to intimidate me, but a calm green. He crosses his arms and shakes his head.

"Do you honestly think I will let you get away that easily, little mate?" he growls, then he laughs again. "The Goddess gave you to me, I'm not about to let my gift slip through my fingers."

My heart drops. “I am not yours, Alpha Lucan. I rejected this bond; forcing me to stay would be considered a crime,” I say loud enough for all to hear. “Either let me go, or I will take this up with your council.”

Why is he fighting this?! I am giving him a way out. I’m giving both of us a way out!

He glances around the room, noticing every eye on us; as it should be since he’s the Alpha. I have a feeling if we were alone, he would have dragged me to his room and locked me up with chains in there. There’s a twitch under his eye when he turns back to face me.

“Very well. I accept your rejection, Verena Martelli. You have five minutes to get out of my territory before I come after you,” he says, then he turns his back and walks away from me.

It takes a few seconds for his words to sink in, then I’m moving. My getaway is waiting for me, and I know if I had to wait a second longer, he would definitely throw me in his dungeons. I just didn’t anticipate his unwillingness to let me go.

The black SUV was waiting for me where I asked my contact to park it, and without a second thought, I floor it out of there.

I have a date with Niklaus King, even if he doesn’t know it yet.

