

## SECOND CHANCE LUNA

### Chapter 10

Setting aside the picture, Jason walked back to the kitchen. A small, round table was positioned in front of a bay window with two place

settings arranged across from each other. The kitchen was small, but not cramped, with everything carefully arranged for function. As he

watched, Phoebe plated chicken breasts on top of a mound of rice with vegetables on the side.

She brought them to the table, setting them down before heading to the refrigerator, "I don't have any wine. I hope milk is all right."

~ "Milk is fine," he agreed, though he would have agreed to anything as she poured two glasses before returning to the table.

With a nervous smile, she gestured to his a\_chair "Um...have a seat."

Jason stepped into the kitchen, taking her o\_chair and helping her to sit. When she was comfortable, he carefully moved his place setting so

he sat beside her rather than across before he took his own seat. Phoebe blushed, but remained silent as he surveyed his meal.

Tantalizing smells of herbs and oil made his mouth water as he studied a meal that was certainly o\_camera worthy. Having been the victim

of his sister's cooking in the past, Jason was pleasantly surprised by the skill Phoebe demonstrated with this one meal.

"It looks fantastic," he smiled. "Are you a master chef?"

Phoebe blushed and chuckled, "No. My mother used to run the packhouse kitchen. I learned from her."

"And quite well," Jason added before picking up his utensils and cutting into the chicken. "I wish my sister had half your talent."

It was so tender he didn't even need the knife. His mouth was already watering before he took his first bite. The savory flavor exploded in his mouth, punctuated by the clever mix of herbs and seasonings. Even the pack cooks never made anything so engaging.

"So...you have a sister?" Phoebe asked by way of conversation as she cut into her own meal.

"Yes. Lucille. She's a few years younger than me and already mated," Jason said through mouthfuls. "My Gamma, and one of my best

friends, was her fated mate. I can't tell you who I was more jealous of at the time."

Phoebe chuckled.

"And you? Siblings?"

"No," Phoebe shook her head. "My parents met late in life. My mother wasn't originally from this pack so it was pure chance she met my

father at all."

"Really?"

"She was the head cook in her original pack too. My father was one of our foragers and gardeners, so he was the one usually sent out to

buy groceries. One day, he stopped at a farmer's market and it just happened that my mother was at the same one. They'd both had all but

given up on finding their fated mates by the time they met."

Jason smiled; picturing the moment the pair, well out of their primes, came face to face. Aloud, he said, "Then they had you."

Phoebe nodded, "My father went to school for teaching. He was something of a scholar and the pack tutor."

"Next you're going to tell me he was an expert piano player."

“No. That was my mother. She loved music.”

“Amazing.”

Phoebe shrugged, “Is it? mean, my parents were unranked pack members...just nameless cogs in the machine.”

Jason grimaced at the description, but it wasn't wrong. The majority of pack members were unranked, existing somewhere between the

delta warriors and low-ranked omegas that did the majority of the grunt work. While delta warriors could advance to gamma fighters over

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time, other pack members had little hope of changing their status unless they were lucky to find a mate in the higher ranks.

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“So you learned to cook and music from your mother and to garden and read from your father?”

Phoebe nodded, “I went to college after high school for my teaching degree. I guess that's why I decided to look after the pups. I make up

lessons for them, keep them busy and out of everyone's way...especially Luna Kristie.”

Jason grimaced, “She doesn't seem to like pups in the slightest.”

Phoebe shook her head. Kristie had a short temper and there were many in the pack that bore scars from incurring her wrath. Phoebe was

determined to spare the pups by keeping them away from their unpredictable Luna.

“So you went to college.”

Phoebe nodded.

“That's amazing,” Jason said.

“Is it?”

“Yeah, most pack members stick to whatever work they like, but for someone to have the passion to actually go into higher education is

pretty rare,” Jason said. “You are amazing.”

Phoebe blushed at his compliment, making him wonder if anyone had ever expressed appreciation for her skill and dedication before. He,

for one, would never stop being impressed by everything she accomplished.

“Well, it might not all be about passion,” Phoebe said. “Werewolves aren't allowed to apply for human financial aid, so if they can't get

funds from the pack, most cant afford to go to college even if they wanted to.”

Jason frowned. In truth, he hadn't given it much thought, a curse from being born in the upper ranks where money was seldom an issue,

perhaps. But Phoebe was quite correct. If a pack did not set aside funds for its members to apply for educational aid, then they wouldn't be

able to attend any college.

They took turns talking about themselves as the meal continued. After dinner, they moved to the living room and sat across from each other

on the sofa. Normally, Phoebe would have washed the dishes immediately, but this time she left them in the sink. Jason fondled her slim

hand, listening to her.

“My mother passed away shortly after I graduated. She got sick and just never recovered.”

Jason nodded. It wasn't an unusual fate for aging wolves. While their healing abilities slowed the aging process, it didn't stop it. Their

regenerative abilities worked better against injury than disease.

“My father only lasted another year or so,” Phoebe continued. “But he was never the same.”

That was also not unusual. It was not easy to overcome the breaking of mate bonds, regardless of how. Once one half of the pair passed, the

other usually deteriorated and followed rather quickly. While his own father had passed away years ago, his mother was alive and well, but

she was a special case. She had a strong desire to watch over her children and was eager to hold her grandchildren before she left the

world.

Jason raised her hand to his lips, “I'm sorry you had to go through that alone.”

Phoebe gave him a shy smile and a slight blush colored her cheeks. He wasn't sure if it was a reaction to his sympathy or the kiss. It was

clear she had never been romanced.

“How about you?” Phoebe asked, hoping to take the spotlight off herself. “What's your family like?”

“Well, I already told you about my sister. Our mother is still alive though my father has passed on.”

“Really?”

“Yeah, that was...five years ago?” Jason nodded. “He deteriorated rather quickly after I took my position as Alpha.”

Phoebe frowned. Alphas lost some of their prowess once their heirs took over; however, they often went on to live a decent retired life. For

Jason's father to have reacted that way indicated the passing of leadership was not amicable.

“My father and I never really saw eye to eye,” Jason sighed, continuing without prompting. “We had different ideas of what it meant to be

Alpha...especially when it came to our Luna.”

Phoebe inclined her head to the side.

“He thought I was being stubborn waiting for my fated mate,” Jason explained. “An alpha’s aura is more potent with a mate so he thought I should take a chosen one.”

“...But you didn’t,” Phoebe said. If he had, it would have broken their bond sight unseen.

“I knew somewhere out there was my perfect match. The Goddess is never wrong. But I never imagined she would choose someone as perfect as you.”

Phoebe’s blush deepened. She looked away, her gray eyes shimmering silver. Her brow furrowed as if having an internal debate. Biting her lip, she slowly looked back at him. Her gaze still shimmered with her indecision.

“...Um...can I ask you something?”

“Of course, angel. You can ask me anything.”

“Could you...I mean I don’t want to push you or anything, so you definitely don’t have to...It’s just I never did it before so...would you...

kiss me?” Phoebe’s blush deepened further until she was nearly as red as a beet.

Jason blinked, surprised at the candor of her request, but a smile warmed his expression as Lobo perked up from his near comatose state.

His wolf pressed forward and Jason struggled to keep him in check. As eager as they both were, he refused to overwhelm Phoebe so soon.

Leaning forward, he closed the gap between them. Gently, he pulled her close before tilting her chin and pressing their lips together. Her

lips were soft, pliable as he tasted her for the first time. A soft moan escaped her, encouraging him to deepen the kiss. His tongue slipped

into her mouth, curling around hers.

He pulled away slowly, breathing deep as they sat forehead to forehead. His heart was racing and desires he had laid dormant stirred. He

waited so long every part of him screamed to claim his mate. But he didn't want to scare her. He wanted her willing and ready.

"How was that, angel?" Jason hoarsely whispered.

"It was the best first kiss ever," she answered.

He rubbed noses with her, certain he couldn't remove the smile from his face if he tried, "I'll make sure all your firsts are just as good."

Phoebe blushed as the implication of his promise ran through her mind. Her body shivered with eagerness, but she just wasn't ready.

"Jason."

"Shh. Whenever you're ready, angel," he assured her. "I'm here."

She shivered. It was all so new to her. No one treated her with such consideration or attention. Was it wrong for her to hope it never ended?

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"Angel..."

"Hmm?"

"Can I stay?"

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exclusively available on our site. Happy reading!

Phoebe blinked, pulling away from him. Her heart raced. It was difficult to fight the urge to scream Yes! but did she dare say it? She had

already invited him into her home and allowed him this close. What if he suddenly turned on her? A rejection would be ten times more

painful now that she allowed him in. What if he tried something she wasn't ready for?

"Just to sleep," Jason said, sensing her internal debate. "I promise, I won't try anything... just...I don't think I can sleep knowing you are

out here alone, unprotected. I'll sleep on the porch if that's what you want."

"Oh he's so cute when he begs," Mani cooed. "Let him stay. And don't you dare make him sleep outside. We'll sleep better too."

"All right," Phoebe finally said. She was going to trust her wolf.

He smiled, letting out a relieved sigh as Lobo turned circles. They were going to spend the night with their mate! Jason struggled to control

their eagerness as a hesitant Phoebe stood and led them further into the cottage.

At the back of the cottage, a short hallway terminated in a small bathroom. On either side was a door leading to a bedroom. To his left was

the master bedroom with a full-sized bed and suitably antique o\_ furniture probably over a hundred years old though no doubt new when

originally purchased. Phoebe immediately disappeared inside, returning to the door to shove a bundle of clothes at him, indicating the

bathroom before closing the door.

Jason fought his wolf's disappointment. It was too soon for her to be comfortable changing in front of him. Sheepishly, he retreated to the

bathroom to look at what she gave him to discover a plain white t-shirt and flannel pants. Jason smirked. Like most wolves, he preferred

sleeping nude, but he understood why Phoebe wanted a few layers between them. Jason leaned over the sink, running cold water to splash

over his face both to calm him and cool his ardor.

"Luke?"

"I'm here. You've been quiet all night. I assumed it was going well. S0?"

"I'll be sleeping here."

"So it's going very well."

Jason fought to suppress a growl, "It's not what you think."

"Like hell. It's almost impossible to sleep without your mate once you find them."

"Anything to report?"

"Only that the Alpha and Luna here are getting more annoying. The Beta isn't bad but..."

"I know. He seems to be aware of what is going on, but he lacks the authority to keep the Alpha in line or override him. And he's still

unmated."

"Yeah, if he was mated it would definitely give his aura a boost and if it was his fated mate it might even push him over the top."

"Did they buy your excuse for my absence?"

"To be honest, I don't know if Alpha Graham even heard me. But Luna Kristie was disappointed."

Jason grimaced.

"Don't worry about it. Just focus on your mate."

"Gladly."