

Meeting the Queen

I spent the rest of the afternoon trying to put the reading out of my head and cleaning up. It wasn't that the shop was dirty, but Auntie Tonya wasn't as spry and there were some things she missed, no matter how diligent she thought she was being.

It was nearly time to go upstairs. Luckily, I'd thought ahead and made a large crockpot full of my favorite soup. It was full of a garden's worth of veggies and I would cook noodles to add to it, plus eggs I would boil to add. I made enough so that I could package it up for lunches for a week, with a giant bowl for my dinner tonight.

Just as I was turning out the lights in the oce, I heard a knock at the front door. I hadn't been expecting anyone else, so it made me a little nervous. I looked out the window in the door and saw a large man standing behind a small woman with bronze colored hair.

I opened the door to tell them that the shop wasn't open, but I barely got the word 'we' out before I was overcome by a wave of power. The feeling of shapeshifter rattled in my head. Everything went black.

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When I came to, I was laying on a couch in the teahouse. I put my hand to my head. It was still swimming. I remembered my visitors and looked around. They were by the bar, arguing.

"Let me carry the tray, chouchoutte. If they kick, you'll drop it, then you'll be mad at yourself. You know this isn't because I don't think you're strong. I know you could still kick my ass, even this far along." The man was saying.

I almost laughed when I saw the woman come around the end of the bar. She was almost as big around as she was tall. I didn't know how she could kick the ass of the muscular man who was at least a foot taller.

Auntie Tonya's words came back to me. The Alpha would come for morning sickness remedies for his mate. The rogue queen. I groaned and covered my eyes with my hand. It made sense. They were both alpha wolves. I didn't stand a chance.

Luckily, for me, it seemed that the faint had worn off and I was able to be in the room with them. Only a small bit of dizziness seemed to linger.

"Fine, mon saucisson. You carry it. I'll just waddle my fat ass over there." She laughed.

"Your ass isn't fat, chouchoutte. I'll prove it to you later." He purred.

"You better, Alpha." She purred right back.

I almost smiled. They were really sweet to each other. It boded well for my future that they seemed to be kind. At least, I hoped it did.

"I can hear your heartbeat speeding up, Clover. Don't worry. We're not going to hurt you. Are you alright? Do you know why you fainted?" The girl asked as she sat in the chair by me.

Her power was impressive. I could practically feel it surrounding me. It was like heavy humidity on a hot summer day. I wondered why they were here and moving around my shop like they knew it.

"You're powerful shapeshifters. It makes me dizzy." I murmured.

She looked at the man and, suddenly, the pressure of the air seemed to lessen and it was like I could breathe again. I even took in a deep soothing breath.

"I'm Queen Bellamy Deveraux of the Eaten Heart Collective. You applied to join. I came to meet you. This is my mate, Alpha Lucien Deveraux of Lune Rouge. We come by from time to time, and we like to meet the witches who may be coming onto our land." She said.

"Oh, I didn't think you'd actually come here. I'm so sorry I wasn't able to warn you. I was working on hiring two other people to work in the shop so that I don't risk falling over if a powerful shapeshifter comes in." I told her.

"So it's any powerful shifter, then?" Alpha Lucien asked.

"Yes, Alpha. Any powerful shifter can make me faint. I have animal magic. It's rare. No one realized that I would have trouble with shifters until the rst time I met one. Aunt Tonya has animal magic, but never had the problem I do." I admitted.

"But you're feeling better now? We pulled back our Alpha auras as much as we can." Bellamy said.

"I can breathe better. Thank you for doing that." I smiled slightly.

"We made you some tea. Drink. We can begin the interview when you're a little better." Bellamy told me.

I picked up the cup and sipped the tea. It was really good. A berry tea with added citrus. I didn't think we had anything like it in the shop. I felt my strength coming back to me a little.

"Please, ask your questions." I said with a smile.

"If you're sure." She replied.

I nodded. I was ready for any question she threw at me. As long as I didn't have to stand. I didn't think she was going to administer a eld sobriety test or anything, I hoped not, at least.

Bellamy pulled a tablet from her bag and turned it on. After a few moments, she tapped around on it. She handed it to me.

"This is your le. You reported three types of magic anity. I know you're here to take over for your great aunt, but how long are you here before your arranged marriage is settled?" Bellamy asked.

I gasped. "How did you know about that? No one outside the community of witches knows about the arranged marriages."

"I met a witch around this time last year who told me that witches with two or more anities end up in arranged marriages. I need to know how long you will be living here or if your chosen husband will be coming to live with you. I'll need him to register, too." She said.

"I refused. I was disowned by most of my family after I told them I'd rather die than marry someone because I was told to. I... I tried to take my own life. That's why they let me go. My parents didn't want to risk losing me forever because of tradition. I have aunts and uncles who call me a selsh child and refuse to talk to me until I accept my chosen husband. He was my childhood friend. I didn't even know they'd betrothed us." I sighed and shook my head.

"I'm not going to have an angry coven out here starting trouble, am I?" Bellamy questioned with a quirked brow.

"They want me back, but on their terms. They want me crawling back begging for acceptance. I refuse. I can do ne on my own, and I will." I insisted.

"I like that. A re witch with a ery personality. You're under our protection. Stay a light witch and you won't lose it. You turn to the dark and you're gone. I can have you relocated to a city that has people who are friendlier with that sort of element, but I don't permit it this close to my family." She said.

"I would never go dark. I have too many things I enjoy. I don't even eat meat. Animal aligned witches almost never go dark. Same with plant witches. Don't worry about me. I'm just as light as my Aunt Tonya." I smiled.

"Good. On the website there's a link for witches to request time in the pack land for gathering ingredients. You can book time and plot the region you'll be in. That's so we can nd you if you get lost. There's a monthly newsletter that will go to your email. We send out email announcements as well. Let us know if anyone bothers you. We'll send someone to take care of the issue." Bellamy offered.

"Thank you. I really appreciate it. I'm starting to feel less dizzy. Maybe this means that I won't faint when I see you again."

"We won't risk it and will call you before we come so you can be prepared... and seated. I'm not usually possessive, but you're all tall and leggy and I didn't like my mate picking you up and carrying you around." She said with a slight growl.

I blushed. "I'm not going to steal him. You're so pretty and tiny. That's what men want. A woman who looks like she needs them."

Lucien started laughing. Bellamy glared at him. I felt like I had stumbled into something with that comment.

"Bellamy only looks like she needs to be protected. The fact of the matter is, she's a lot scarier than I am. I'm just an Alpha who got lucky enough to mate with the deadliest rogue queen in the country." He told me with a wink.

"Damned right you got lucky. You start trying to protect me without my permission and I'll give you back to the vampires." She grumbled.

"I would never do that. Are you tired, my love? Would you like me to carry you to the car? Are the babies starting to get feisty again?" Lucien simpered over her.

"We need to go home. I need sleep. It was nice to meet you Clover." Bellamy said as she took the tablet back and put it back in the bag. "Sorry to leave you with the dishes."

"No problem. Drive safe. Thank you for coming to see me. I really appreciate your dedication to your people." I replied with a wave.

They left and the air seemed to clear entirely within a few minutes. I nished my tea and cleaned up. They seemed like a really cute couple. I hoped to see them again.