

3 My Mate

Ella POV

I'm turning sixteen today. It's hard to believe we have been living in the castle for six years now. I really had hoped I would have my wolf by now. My parents explained exactly why we had to move to the castle after I insisted I had the right to know. I'm not a ten-year-old little girl anymore. I realize they were trying to protect me and I understand that bringing us here was the best option to protect not only me but Levi too. I still miss seeing my family all the time, but the castle has become home now too. I'm excited about going back to the pack and see my family. I still don't understand exactly why they were so interested in protecting me, but I assume it's about my powers. I still don't know what my powers will be or when I'll get them. Micah and Loreli are so loving and kind, but Jacob is an a**hat still. I guess if you are the next king you can act like a tool whenever the mood strikes you. He still has all the she-wolves around here falling at his feet and treats me like I don't even exist when he isn't being an a**hole. I don't know why I even care. We haven't been friends for a very long time. The worst part is that I feel drawn to him. After everything that happened last week, I just pray he isn't my mate.

Flashback

I'm sweating and breathing heavily. "Ella, you did amazing. I can't imagine what you will be able to do once you have your powers. I'm so glad you all came here to live with us and became part of our family" Micah says and I smile. "Loreli, Jacob, princess, and I think of all of you as our family." I can't help the laugh that escapes me. "I don't know if Jacob would agree with that." His face falls at my comment. "My son maybe acting like a jerk right now Ella, but I promise you he will become the man he is meant to be one day. He will be the King and mate his Queen deserves." "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to upset you." He wraps me in a hug and I hug him back. I feel him stiffen and a few seconds later he pulls back. "I have to go deal with some security issues and I can't seem to get through to Jacob or Loreli. Can you go ask Loreli to send him to meet me, Ella?" "Of course, Micah" I say before I head to their wing of the castle. I knock and there is no answer. I push the door open and call out to Loreli. After a few seconds of silence, I head down the hallway to Jacob's room. I knock lightly on the door. If I knock loudly, I'm sure he will be annoyed and I can't deal with his sh**ty attitude today. After a few seconds, the door opens and I feel bile rise in my throat.

Haley smiles and it takes everything in me not to punch her in the face. I don't know why I care that she is standing in a robe that is half open. She is clearly naked underneath. "What do you want mutt?" Her words pull me back from the rage that is boiling deep inside me. I take a deep breath before I answer. "King Micah wants Jacob downstairs right now." She chuckles "Jacob is a little tired right now, but I'll let him know." She looks over her shoulder and I get a clear view of Jacob lying in his bed with his chest bare. He is very evidently naked. I can't believe he would f**k someone who isn't his mate. He turned eighteen and none of the unmated females were his mate, including this b**ch standing there looking smug. "You can run along mutt. I will wake up my future mate and King" Haley says before she steps into my space. "The rst thing I'm going to do when I become Queen is send your pathetic family back where they belong." "F**k you, Hayley" I say before I turn rushing away from her. I head straight to my room and into my shower. I don't even care who he is with, but I do feel bad for whoever is unfortunate enough to be his mate. I wish the words made the ache I feel in my heart go away.

Flashback Ends

We are heading to the Scarlett Rose to celebrate my birthday with my whole family today. I go into my closet and pick out a owered sundress that has a halter top. My long red hair almost reaches my waist now. As soon as I'm showered, I slip my dress on and pull my hair into a high ponytail. I put on light make-up and slip into my ballerina ats. I open the door and start down the hallway that leads to the private dining room. My family is already seated along with Loreli and Micah. The princess will be staying behind with Cali. She loves it when I call her that. She is a sweet little girl, nothing like her brother. She walks over to me and I bend down. "Ella, I made this for your birthday" princess says. She hands me a macaroni necklace. I slide it over my neck and kiss her sweet little cheek. "Thank you, princess." She rushes over and takes her seat next to Loreli, who is smiling from ear to ear.

I'm just about to take my seat when Jacob walks in. His eyes meet mine before they look at my dress. I see anger ash in his eyes before he schools his expression. I roll my eyes before I go take my seat next to my mother. I notice that Loreli is smirking at Micah but I'm not sure why. After breakfast, Micah opens a portal and we step through. I have missed my family and pack. I look around and as soon as I see Ruby, I rush toward her. We have always had a special relationship and honestly, I want to talk to her about everything that has happened with Jacob before we head back to the palace. "Ella, I missed you so much" she says. I hug my grandparents and my cousins. I feel so at ease being back here and I say a prayer again to the goddess that I shift soon. Levi pushes past me and wraps Ruby in a hug.

We all take our seats after we get our food. I can feel someone staring at me. I realize it's Jacob and I feel like he is going to bore a hole into me with his gaze. I stand and walk back toward the pack house. Ruby is inside helping with the food. Now is my chance to talk to her. She sees me and her features soften. We walk to the oce and the minute I'm inside I tell her everything. She stands coming around the desk and pulls me into a hug. "I'm sorry he is being a jerk. Boys aren't always the best at showing how they feel or why they act the way they do. I'm sure he will be sorry for all the things he has done with females that were not his mate someday soon." I laugh, I can't see Jacob ever being sorry. He will think the woman he's mated to should be grateful to have him as a mate. "What do you think he likes me because I feel like he hates me?" I see sadness ashes in her eyes. "I don't think he hates you. You are a very special girl and when you nd your mate, he is going to love you. He will never look at another she-wolf after he nds you." I feel like there is something she isn't saying, but I don't push the issue. "It doesn't matter if he likes me. I only want my mate and I pray it's not him. He deserves that b**ch." My cousin raises her eyebrows and I can feel the blush on my cheeks. "It sounds like you do care, Ella." I'm grateful when she changes the subject.

"I have something that might cheer you up. I haven't told Maverick yet, but I told Jade and Autumn. It can't hurt to tell one more person. I'm pregnant" she blurts out. I pull her into a hug. "I'm so happy for you Ruby. I love you and hope we are home soon. I want to be here with you this time." "I'll make sure that Tabby lets you know so you can be here", Ruby says. Hopefully, we will just be here and I won't have to miss anything. "I guess I had better go tell Maverick. I know he is going to be over the moon." She takes my hand and we head downstairs. Maverick rushes over as soon as he sees us. He is so in love with Ruby and I want that with my mate someday. "Is everything alright, Ruby" he says. She looks at me before she looks back at him. "I'm pregnant", she says, and he lifts her in the air.

I look at the table and notice that one of the girls from the pack is sitting next to Jacob. He smiles at her and I want to punch him in his handsome face. Where the hell did that come from? When she touches his arm, I'm done. I start to walk toward the woods. I need to get away from him and his bullish*t. I reach the lake and take a seat on a rock. "Ella, don't be sad. No matter what you have me", I hear a voice. I look around but there is no one around me. "Silly girl, it's me your wolf. You wanted to shift and now I'm here." "Oh, my goddess, my wolf. What is your name?" "My name is Maya and you, my girl, are very special. We are going to be very special together. Now I'm sure you would like someone with you, so now is your chance." I link my mother "mom, I'm going to shift. Please don't tell anyone, just come to the lake." She cuts the link and I'm excited and nervous at the same time. "Don't worry Ella, I will always have your back." I love my wolf already and I can't wait to shift to see her for the rst time. I take a deep breath and say a prayer of thanks to the goddess for giving me my wolf.

My mother breaks through the trees. She wraps me in a hug as soon as she sees me. "I'm so happy for you little one." I can't help but laugh. I'm taller than my mother now but she still calls me little one every once and a while. "Don't laugh, you will always be my little one." "Alright Ella, it's time" Maya says. My mother steps back and I can see happiness and concern on her face. "Let your wolf take over and don't ght her, Ella", my mother says. I take some deep breaths and I feel pain radiate throughout my body. Bones start to break and shift. I try not to scream but the pain is too much. I fall to the ground on all fours. Beautiful red fur sprouts from my skin and bones continue to snap and reconfigure. I don't know how long it lasts but with one last pop everything goes silent. My mother has tears in her eyes as she walks toward us. My wolf lays down and my mother rests her head against ours. "You are beautiful just like your mother. Ruby my wolf feels her connection to you pup. You will always be ours" my mother says before she steps back and starts to strip. She shifts and our wolves nuzzle each other before we take off. We run for a long while before we head back to our clothes.

I feel bad that we left a party that was supposed to be for me, but I'm too excited to care. We head back once we are dressed. As soon we step through the trees, the most delicious scent of creamsicle invades my nose. I can't claim my mate yet by marking because I'm only sixteen, but I'm excited about meeting him. My eyes scan the party and my heart stops when they land on Jacob's smirk. He mouths the word mate and I shake my head no. I turn back and take off through the trees. Maya whimpers but she has no idea all that he has done. "We need to shift now Maya." "Ella, our mate" she starts to say, but I cut her off. "Trust me, we are better off. Please just shift." She whimpers one more time before she shifts ripping our clothes. We run until we can't run anymore. "Ella, I'll hide our scent until we can talk about why you're making me run from the man the goddess chose for us." "Thank you, Maya" I say before she lays down. I can feel people trying to link me and I'm sure it's my parents. I keep the block up because I need time with Maya and to process that Jacob is my mate. I need to gure out what to do next. How can I accept him after all he did?