

Alpha Deckard is my Second Chance Mate - Deckard Alpha 21[1,453 words]

Chapter 21

BONDING CEREMONY CHAOS

The bonding ceremony is tonight, and th

the castle is **alive** with bustling activity. Bria had sent a small army of maids to cater to my every need as I prepared for the occasion. I sat still as they worked on my **hair** and nails, their chatter about the ceremony filling the room. For what was supposed to be a simple bonding ceremony, the preparations were nothing short of extravagant. If this was the effort for a bonding ceremony, I can only imagine what **a** wedding in the Bloodbane caule would look like.

Even my main wedding with Dane wasn't this luxurious

I peep

out the window, curious to see how **far** along they were with the arrangements. The sight below took my breath **away**. The main courtyard had been transformed into **a** magical scene. Rows of lanterns lined the stone **pathways**, their soft golden light already glowing **against** the dimming sky. Towering arches draped in lush red and white roses framed the aisle, their petals spilling onto the polished stone.

From the faint melodies drifting up from below, I knew there was an orchestra rehearsing somewhere on the grounds. Everything screamed royalty, dominance, and tradition

"This is not Deckard's doing." I murmur to myself. There was no way he'd orchestrate something this elaborate. No, this had the elders written all over it. They'd been clamoring for a Luna for years, and tonight was their victory.

Lost in thought, my eyes wandered, scanning the bustling courtyard until they landed on him. Deckard. He stood near the ceremonial dais, speaking with one of the gamma warriors. Even from this distance, his presence was magnetic, his broad shoulders **and** commanding posture impossible to miss.

Before I could retreat, his head tilted slightly, and his sharp, predatory eyes locked onto mine.

My heart stopped.

I froze. like prey caught under the gaze of a predator. His lips curved into the faintest smirk, sending a shiver down my spine. Panic jolted through me, and I quickly ducked below the windowsill, crawling out of sight,

“Shit,” I whisper, my pulse racing. I think he saw me!

Since the **kiss** we shared last night, Deckard hasn’t spoken a word **to** me. I’m not planning to break the silence, either. It was all my doing. Why did I have to embrace him or **kiss** him!

I turned my attention to the dresses that had been laid out for me. Each one is stunning, and I can’t decide which to choose.

The first **was a** floral blue gown, delicate and intricate. The bodice was adorned with hand-embroidered blossoms that cascaded down to flowing skirt. It had an ethereal quality, the kind of dress that made you feel **like** royalty.

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The **second** was a bronze peach silk dress. Its glossy fabric shimmered under the light, draping effortlessly over curves. The color perfectly complimented my skin tone, giving it **a** warm, golden glow. It was elegant, modern, and breathtakingly sensual..

The third **was a** green gown that radiated earthiness and grace. Made of soft, flowing fabric, it had subtle gold embellishments along the neckline **and** sleeves, resembling vines.

I barely had time to linger over my choices before the maids arrived, bustling in with tools, brushes, and jewelry. They worked swiftly, transforming me for the event. When they were done with my **hair** and makeup, I turned to the mirror and

I could hardly recognize myself.

It had been so long since I’d seen myself look like this—radiant, confident, unburdened. The stress lines and the tile bags under my eyes, reminders of the nights I’d spent crying over my ex-husband’s cruelty, were gone. For the first time in years, I felt beautiful

While I was getting ready, one of the maids entered the room carrying a golden cup. Her demeanor was calm, but there was a certain urgency in her voice **as** she placed the cup on the table

“This is from the riders, my **Luna**,” she said, bowing her head slightly. “In is tradition for the future Lana to drink from this cup before the bonding

I frowned, unfamiliar with such a tradition. In all my conversations about the customs of the Bloodne **pack**, I’d never heard of this. Still, the mention of the elders gave me pause.

They had been nothing but stern and unyielding in their expectations, and defying them on such an important day might stir unnecessary trouble.

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Hesitating briefly, I picked up the golden cup and took a sip. The liquid was strange-sweet yet slightly bitter, and it left a peculiar warmth down my throat. I drank half of it before setting the rest

“**Thank** you” I said to the maid, who nodded and slipped out of the room.

Kush, one of the maids **tending** to me, stepped closer, carefully fluffing the hair on the **ma’ani**?” she **asked** eagerly, her **hands** brushing the fabric.

The dresses laid before me. “What do you will you be wearing,

considering, stat

the stunning options. Each one is so beautiful, and I still can’t decide

“Why don’t you **pick**?” I finally say, warning to Kush with a **stall** side.

Her eyes widened in **shock**. “Really? You honor me, my Lady,” she stammered, her voice filled with disbelief and excitement.

I chuckled softly at her reaction. I knew she saw this as a privilege, but the truth was I genuinely need her help. I had no idea which dress would **make** me feel the most confident tonight.

“It’s just a dress, Ruth!” I say with a small laugh, shaking my head at her confusion.

“No, it’s not, my Lady!” she **exclaim**, eyes wide with excitement. “I get to pick the dress the Lady wears for her bonding ceremony! Of course, it’s a privilege!”

Her sincerity caught

me off **guard**, but it was endearing.

“Alright, then,” **I say**, gesturing for her to continue

She steps closer, her fingers brushing over the delicate fabrics. “The blue one goes with your eyes, while the peach matches your skin perfectly,” she said thoughtfully. “But I prefer the blue one, because you look like the moon goddess. The alpha wouldn’t be able to take his eyes off you!”

Her conviction was contagious. “Okay, I’ll go with that,” I decide.

Moments later, I stood before the mirror, the blue floral gown clinging to my body like a second skin. It accentuated my curves, the intricate floral patterns flowing gracefully down the fabric, and revealed just enough cleavage to be tasteful yet alluring. Hooked ethereal, almost like the moon goddess Ruth spoke of.

I stared at my reflection for a moment longer, feeling a pang of nervousness at the thought of Deckard seeing me like this.

But within 30 minutes, the excitement **gave** way to something unsettling. A strange **heat** began spreading through my body, making my skin feel as though it were burning from the inside out. My pulse quickened, and restlessness **seeped** into my inescapable

I waved the maids away with a forced smile. "Excuse me for a bit, I think I'll take a short nap before the ceremony."

Once alone, I sat on the edge of the bed, trying to steady my breathing. But the heat only grew worse, **prickling** across my **skin**. I wiped my brow noticing a faint sheen of sweat.

What is **happening**! My body feels strange—hot, restless, out of control, I couldn't place the feeling, but it was unlike anything I'd ever experienced. Something **bad** right

The dress was unbearable now, clinging to my heated skin like a tormentor. My body felt alien, my thoughts disjointed. I staggered to the door, locking it behind me with shaky fingers, before hurriedly peeling the dress off. The **cool** air against any bare skin offered little relief as the oppressive heat churned within me.

I can hear the faint sound of harps and the band playing a slow, melodic tune from outside. The ceremony had started. Deckard would be waiting, the elders **eager**, but here I am, sinking into a haze I can't escape

My mind feels foggy, **like** a dense cloud has descended over my thoughts, I swayed on my feet, clutching the edge of the dresser for balance. Why do I feel this way? Like, I need a man inside of me...so bad!

Am I drunk? No, that cannot be it—I hadn't touched alcohol all day.

No. just tea and something else

My gaze darted to the table to see the cup I drank from, but there **was** nothing on the table any more.

I was the last thing

Before I could piece it together, there was a **knock** at the door—sharp, deliberate, and echoing through the haze consuming me. It was then I heard before my memory went dark.

