

Alpha Deckard is my Second Chance Mate - Deckard Alpha 23[1,613 words]

Chapter 23

Deckard

The bonding ceremony **stirs** a tension within me I refuse to name, but I won't deny it outright. Amica needs protection, **and** while I **may** not want her, she "**is**" my mate. **That** alone makes it my duty to safeguard her. But let's be clear—protection is the **only** obligation I owe her. Nothing more. nothing less. As Luna of the Bloodbane pack, she falls under my domain, and everyone here knows what that means. No one under my protection goes unguarded—least of all Luna.

Every night I spend with **her** seems to peel back another layer of who she is, revealing parts of her that unsettle me in ways I can't ignore. Last night! Last night made me want to hold her close and dare the world to try **and touch** her. **She** will never feel unprotected while I'm here. Not **a** single thing—no man, no beast, not even the shadows from her cursed dreams—will by a hand on her while I draw breath. Nothing threatens **what** is mine.

She kissed me last night. Fear gripped her as she clung to me, trembling, her arms wrapped tightly around my frame. Her lips sought mine, and in that moment, all I wanted was to give her everything she needed.

This morning, when I woke, I felt something I've never experienced before—**Canine's** excitement. My wolf, always brooding and distant, was practically humming with energy. It was foreign, unsettling

What is this excitement about? **I ask** him, uneasy.

"We will be bond to our own!" Canine's **voice** echoes in my mind, brimming with joy,

Be bond to our own? **His** words catch me off guard. I didn't know he was even capable of feeling excitement, not with his **usual** cold **detachment**.

But let's not mistake this for something it **kn't**

I'm only going through with this bonding ceremony to shut the mouths of gossipers and those who dare question my **pack's** strength or its future. They **think** the Bloodbane **pack** could falter without an heir Laughable. This is about power, legacy, and silencing doubt.

Do not for a single moment, think **that** she is indispensable. The second **she** proves unworthy of **me or does** anything to tarnish the **reputation** of my pack, she will find herself cast out. I will not hesitate. My loyalty is to the pack, not to her.

Bria and **the rest of the elders had taken complete** charge **of** the bonding ceremony preparations. When I walked around the **castle** and saw the **lavish** decorations, I was taken aback by how far they had gone to make everything look grand. To them, it was as real and meaningful as it could get. To me? It was nothing more **than** a farce.

As I stood there, half-admiring the effort they had poured into this, my eyes caught sight of Amica peeking out from the window of her **chamber** like a child. She looked radiant—her skin glowing with **a** softness that reminded me of her naivety. It was only a brief moment, a fleeting glimpse. but it stayed in my mind longer than it should have.

The second she realized **I** had noticed her, she ducked hurriedly. I couldn't help the small chuckle that **escaped** me. There was something amusingly childish about her reaction.

My amusement didn't go unnoticed. As my gaze shifted away from the window, it met **Bria's** who was standing close to me like a creep

She was watching me, a knowing smile tugging at the corners of her lips. Hidden, but not quite enough.

I **rolled** my eyes, hoping she'd let it slide. Of **course**, **Bria** wouldn't, her expression far too pleased with itself, she was clearly unable to resist the opportunity for some chit-chat.

"Alpha" Bria began, clearing her throat as though to steady herself. "The ceremony will begin soon. Why don't **you** go and **get** prepared while leaving the rest of the arrangements to us?"

I could tell there was more she wanted to say, but the look on my face shut her down before she could get another word **out**.

Fortunately, I was spared further small talk when my Beta, Leonard, approached. His expression was grim, signaling the seriousness of whatever

news he bore.

"It's about the Infinity Rogues," he started, lowering his **voice**. "Rumors are circulating that their rebel leader is dead, and another rogue **has taken** over. That might explain the change in their attack patterns.

His words made me pause. "That makes no **sense and** makes sense at the same time," I **said**, "We all know the rogues are nothing more than nuisances. And it's common knowledge they'd never dare target a big pack like mine,"

I frowned, my thoughts racing. “Either this new leader is someone fresh in town—too new to understand the rules—or he’s just plain stupid.” **My**

voice carried the weight of my annoyance **as** I worked to analyze the situation.

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“You’re right, Alpha.” Leonard says. his some grave. “But it seems they have a deliberate agenda this time. They attacked some Gamma warriors and even had the audacity to try and kidnap the Luna...”

His words echo in my mind, bringing back the memory of those rogues

pulling Amica au

aaway, Anger burns through me, fueling my rage

“I want men stationed all over the city and within the smaller packs. I need every scrap of information about this bastard who dares to challenge us.” I command, my voice firm and unyielding “If you catch a rogue who refuses to talk, kill him **on** the **spot**. If he talks, kill him when he’s done.”

There’s no room for argument in my tone, and I turn on my heel to walk away.

“Alpha, congratulations, by the way, Leonard calls after me, **but** I don’t bother looking back or acknowledging him.

A few hours later, the ceremony begins. After what feels **like** an endless charade, it’s finally my turn to **step** forward and wait for Amica to perform the bonding rites.

Getting dressed and showing up here wouldn’t have been possible if it weren’t for Canine’s insistence. No elder, no pack member, no amount of chanting or ranting could have forced me onto this **stage** without his push

I know this is what my pack needs. I need an heir

I stand tall as the priest begins his rites, his voice echoing through the grand hall. The weight of the moment settles over me, but I keep my composure. Soon, the **call is** made for the future Luna to step **forward**

“**May** we have the future Luna come forward to swear her bond to her Alpha,” the priest announces, his tone patient but firm.

I glance around, expecting to see her or at least **a** glimpse of her servants leading the way. But there’s nothing—no train, no movement, no sign of Amica. What game **is** she playing now?

The priest repeats his call, his voice growing louder. Still, there's no sign of her. My irritation simmers just beneath the surface,

Then, amidst the crowd, I spot Mary. She's dressed in bold red, her face perfectly made up **as** if she **has** another event lined up after this one.

"Til go get her," Bria offers, rising from her seat.

But before she can move, Mary's voice cuts through the moment. "No, let the Alpha **go** and I get her. She might be shy."

The corner of her lips tilts into a sly **smile**, and I clench my jaw, reading more into her words than I care to admit.

I know **Mary**, and I know when she's being sarcastic. Something is going on...

I force myself to remain composed, refusing to look as clueless as I truly feel. Slowly, I step away from the piercing eyes of the crowd and make **my** way toward Amica's chambers.

When I **arrive**, I'm greeted by a sight that sets my blood boiling—a Camma warrior at her door, fiddling with the handle as if trying to force **his way** inside

roar, my tone reverberating through the hallway,

"What the hell are you doing here?" I ro

The **warrior** immediately steps back, bowing low. "My Alpha, I came to retrieve the Luna, but her door is locked from the inside, and she isn't responding." he explains, his voice trembling

"Since when is it your duty to fetch the Luna directly from her room!" My anger flares, the heat of it rising with every passing second.

"Forgive me, **Alpha**. I was just following instructions.." he pleads, his voice desperate, but his excuse only **fuels** my rage further.

I glare at him, my jaw tightening. "Instructions from whom?" I demand, my bone like **a** whip.

I **knock** on the door repeatedly, **each** strike harder than the last, but there's no answer. Still, I know she's inside. Her faint groans give her away.

What the hell is wrong with her now!

“Get lost,” I command the Gamma, my **voice** a low growl **that** brooks no argument. Without hesitation, he flees down the hall, his footsteps **fading**

into silence.

I hesitate for a moment, my **hand** lingering on the door. I don’t want to **raise an** alarm, not here, not now. The crowd is still waiting, and **I** know what this looks like—Em being stood up. But why!

I never wanted this bonding ceremony in the first place, but I showed up. I **gave** her **every** chance to **walk** away, and she didn’t take it. So why chicken out now!

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sprawled on the bed, half

The door creaks open, and wha

The moment her eyes meet mine, she wrangles upright and grabs me like a desperate woman, her arms clutching me with a desperation...

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