

His Bitter Luna

The Mating Ball

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1778 Words

Samantha “Hold still, Samantha,” My mother huffs. I sit in a chair in my closet as she does my hair. I am so excited as I have just turned eighteen and I get to go to the mating ball at the castle. “I am just so happy, Mom.” Mom tugs on my hair, “I know, honey,” She sighs. “But I need to finish your hair. No daughter of mine is going to ball looking like a schlub.” I roll my eyes as she continues fixing my long red hair. I am wearing a gorgeous green gown that we picked out together. It goes with my green eyes that my father says will attract all the males. My father, John Wheeler, is the Alpha of Crimson Crest Pack, and my mother is his Luna. I have had a good life and have wanted nothing except for my fated mate. My wolf Aria has been restless in the week since my birthday. “Hold still,” Mom grunts, almost burning me with the curling iron. “Samantha, Natalie,” My father calls into my room. “We are in here, John,” Mom responds. My father steps into my closet wearing one of his best suits. He and Mom are escorting me to the palace for the ball. “I can’t believe my little girl is going to the Royal Mating Ball,” He shakes his head. “I am so excited, Daddy,” I clap my hands. “Well, I can’t say I am,” Dad frowns. “John,” Mom hisses. “What Nat? I am her father, and I am not quite ready to give up my baby girl,” Dad smiles. “I will be fine, Daddy,” I grin. My father shakes his head. “Marcus found his mate,” I mention my older brother. “And she is lovely.” “She is,” Mom nods. “And Charlene’s father

was just as apprehensive about his daughter leaving her home pack, too,” Dad sighs. “Just know that I love you, Samantha.” “I love you too, Daddy,” I say. “All done,” Mom declares and stands up. She is wearing a lighter green gown, highlighting her red hair and green eyes. I inherited her hair and eyes, while my father has brown hair and hazel eyes like my brother. I stand up and look myself over. My mother curled my hair, and it goes halfway down my back. “Thank you, Mom.” “Are you two ready?” Dad asks. “Hugo and Deanna are waiting downstairs with Lydia.” I grin when he mentions my best friend. Lydia is the daughter of the beta, and she is going too. “Oh, I hope Lydia has luck at the ball too.” “We are ready, John,” Mom says. “The omegas already took our bags down.” Dad ushers us out of my room. Marcus is in the hall with his pregnant mate, Charlene. My brother smiles at me, “Look at my baby sister. You look almost like a grown-up.” I nudge him hard, and he pretends to be in pain, “I am a grown-up, Marc.” He reaches out to ruffle my hair. “Marcus John Wheeler, if you mess up her hair, I will spank you,” Our mother barks. Marcus holds his hand up, “Sorry, Ma.” He directs his hazel eyes at me, “I hope you find your mate tonight, Sam. And he better be good to her, or I will hurt him.” I wrap my arms around my brother, “I love you too, Marcus.” I smile at Charlene. “Good luck, Sam. I hope you get as lucky as I did,” Charlene looks at my brother lovingly. Marcus smiles at her and kisses her cheek. “I hope you will be able to meet your nephew,” Marcus places his hand on Charlene’s belly. “I wouldn’t miss it for the world,” I grin. “Come on,” Dad huffs. “Bye,” I wave at Marcus and Charlene as I am ushered down the hall. “Sam!” My best friend Lydia squeals excitedly. She is wearing a yellow dress that looks divine on her. She has her short brown hair nicely styled.

“You look beautiful.” “Come on, girls,” Dad says, nudging us towards the limo. Lydia’s father, Hugo, looks at my father, “Are you ready for this, John?” “Not at all, Hugo,” Dad responds. We all get into the limo, and I sit by Lydia while our parents chat. “So, who do you think will be your mate?” Lydia asks. “I don’t know,” I shake my head. “Prince Beau, perhaps?” She smirks. “You know Beau and I are just friends,” I shrug. “Like you haven’t had a crush on him for years,” Lydia giggles. “Everyone has a crush on Beau,” I laugh. ‘It’s not Beau,’ My wolf Aria speaks up. I say nothing as I settle in for the ride. The royal pack is only an hour away, but it feels like forever with the nervous butterflies in my stomach. As soon as we arrive, I have difficulty keeping Aria from leaping out of my head. “Calm that wolf, sweetie,” My father says as I exit the limo. “How did- “ “Did I know?” Dad grins. “I am your father.” I roll my eyes as we enter the palace. It is done so beautifully with all the flowers and banners. “Hello, your majesty,” Dad greets King Michael Peters. “Good to see you again, John,” the king responds. His son Beau is beside him, and I feel slight disappointment that he isn’t my mate. “Hi, Sam,” He waves, and I sense his own disappointment. “I guess we aren’t mates.” “I guess not,” I sigh. “Still friends?” He smiles. “Always,” I pat his shoulder. “Come on, Sam,” My mother beckons me away as we step to the entrance of the ballroom. I go in ahead of my parents and feel so many eyes on me. My excitement has turned into mild terror as I am announced. “Samantha Arlene Wheeler, daughter of John Wheeler, Alpha of Crimson Crest Pack.” I take my bow as my father and mother flank me. I sniff the air, and all I smell is the roasted chicken dinner. I sigh as they lead me into the ballroom. “Nothing?” Dad asks. I shake my head. “You will find him,” Mom tries to comfort me. “Lydia

Cheyenne Carson, daughter of Hugo Carson, Beta of Crimson Crest Pack,” My best friend is introduced. I see Lydia sniffing the air, and her eyes turn black as a handsome man approaches her. I sigh as they embrace each other. “Whoa, Lydia’s mate is Jerome Slater,” Dad says. I walk a few feet away and sit at a table. My best friend looks elated with her mate. A waiter comes by with glasses of cider, and I take two, wishing they were alcohol, and drink them down. “Sam,” Lydia walks up with the handsome man on her arm. “This is my mate!” “I’m happy for you,” I say, trying to stave off my bitterness. “Jerome, this is my best friend, Samantha,” Lydia introduces me. “Your father is John Wheeler?” Jerome asks. He is a big male with short black hair and brown eyes with dark tan skin. “He is,” I nod. “Cool,” Jerome grins. “Jerome is from the Scarlett Meadow Pack,” Lydia smiles. “That’s great,” I say through gritted teeth. “Sam,” Lydia looks at me, “Are you jealous?” “No,” I mumble. Lydia folds her arms and glares at me, “You are,” She yells. “You are jealous.” “No, I’m not,” I argue while Jerome watches us with a raised eyebrow. “You can’t stand that I found my mate first,” Lydia laughs. “It’s not my fault.” “I’m not mad, Lydia,” I growl. “Neither am I,” She shouts back. “Girls,” My mother walks over to us with Lydia’s mother. “Is everything alright?” “Sam is being a baby because I found my mate before her,” Lydia glares. “Should I be worried?” Jerome speaks up. “They are always like this,” Mom says. “Lydia and Sam argue like sisters,” Deanna laughs. The scent of bourbon hits me like a truck. It reminds me of all the times Lydia and I broke into my father's liquor cabinet. I turn as a deep growl rumbles through the room. An alpha that breeds fear into others, not even the king, comes close to his strength and stands at the other end of the ballroom, staring me down. He is large and intimidating, with his black hair

and black eyes, wearing a black suit. The man marches straight towards me, causing everyone in the room to move out of his path. With a dominant growl, he wraps his strong arm around me as Aria declares, 'Mate!' in my head. "I believe you are my mate," he says in a Russian accent. "Oh my god," I hear my mother squeak. "I believe you are," I say while trembling in his presence. "What is your name, beautiful?" He asks. "S-s-Samantha Wheeler," I manage to get out.

"Samantha, I hope you fix that tremble because I cannot have a weak Luna," He hisses. I nod. "My daughter is quite strong," My father chimes in. "Alpha Wheeler," My mate turns to him. "This is your daughter?" "Yes, sir," My father holds his hand out. My mate looks me in the eyes and grasps my chin with strong hands. He leans in, and his scent is intoxicating as he kisses my lips. The sparks from our growing bond make me lean into him. "Samantha's mate is Dmitry Volkov," I hear Lydia say. "Alpha Dmitry Volkov of Shadow Woods," My father confirms.