

Ryder The Mate-less c 1

Ryder and the Matchmaker

1933 Words

Ryder (1 month before turning 18) She sat nervously in the waiting area to see the Matchmaker; it was a tradition here within the pack to come and see the Matchmaker, one month before you turned 18; to see how long you had to wait on scenting out one's Mate. She wasn't the only wolf here, there were four others waiting as nervously as she was for their names to be called. Her father Dereck was not here to see it. He had passed away a year ago now; she'd lost him in a rogue attack, though she still got to live in the house he had raised her in. Alpha Franco had asked her what it was she wanted to do. She had been only a month from turning 17 when her father had died and Alpha Franco had thought she was old enough to live on her own, in that house, if she wanted to stay there. He had given her the option of moving to a single dorm, or finding a friend's family to move in with, seeing as she didn't have any other family here. Her grandparents had passed a decade ago, and she'd never had a mother. She'd died in childbirth. All Ryder knew was that her mother had been her father's girlfriend in high school, they'd gotten pregnant at 17, and that Ryder had been born before her mother was 18. It had been a difficult birth, and she'd died due to complications. That was all he would ever say on the subject. Ryder had opted to stay within her father's home. It was small and neat, just a two-bedroom cottage, and it was safely located in the middle of the pack. She'd had friends stay over all the time in the past year, so she wasn't too lonely. Alpha Franco had said she was going to be allowed to keep the house once she was 18, instead of it going to someone else, and she didn't have to move into the singles dorms. The only thing Alpha Franco had asked of her in order for her to stay in her family home, was that she had to show him she could keep her grades up. If he thought she was struggling, he would put her with another family, see it as she wasn't coping with being on her own in that house. Ryder had not disappointed him; not only had she thrown herself into her school work, as a distraction from her grief, she'd also gotten excellent grades. Alpha Franco kept a check of all her grades throughout the year, himself. He had smiled at her and said he was happy she was doing well. She'd also thrown herself into her warrior training for both her and her wolf Thorn. They'd needed the distraction from their loneliness, and training helped with that too. Alpha Franco had praised her and encouraged her to attend more training, and told her she had the potential to be ranked right up there as an Elite Warrior; that he wanted to see that happen. That she was going to make her father very proud of her. He'd kind of turned into her personal cheer squad over that year, she'd thought. She liked her Alpha; he was a good kind man. She stood when it was her turn to go into the Matchmaker. Amora was her name; she had been a Luna to this pack some generations back. But she liked this job much better, because she had the use of an ability called foresight, and she put that to matchmaking. Ryder, though nervous, needed this, needed to know about her future Mate. She'd been alone for a year now, and craved a family of her own.

Being alone didn't really suit her or Thorn all that much, it made both of them sad at times to know they had no family anywhere in the wolven world. She had promised her father years ago before he'd died, not to do anything silly like he and her mother had, and to wait until she was 18 before getting involved with boys. He didn't want to see a repeat of the past, he wanted her to be good and strong, healthy. Fully realised before she got pregnant and was to give birth to her first child, so there would be no complications. Told her he didn't want to lose her. He'd reminded her that one didn't have to be in heat to conceive a pup. That it didn't have to be with a Mate either, that her mother had not been in heat nor his Mate, they were just high school sweethearts, and she had still gotten pregnant. That if the Goddess saw fit to gift one a child for whatever reason, she would. He'd not vetoed boys all together, or asked her to wait for her Mate, just asked that she wait till she was 18 was all. Ryder had listened to him and promised him to wait, wanted him to be proud of her. She'd not really been interested in going out there and being with boys. Her father had never been granted a Mate that she knew of; it had always just been him and her, no one else. He'd liked to call himself a lone wolf, and had laughed a lot about it, but she knew deep down he had to want a Mate. Though he didn't go without, he strolled down to the local brothel on many occasions and sorted out his needs with one of the many she-wolves there. She'd never liked that he visited the pack brothel, though she did know the she-wolves and he-wolves that were in there, were willing to be there, and were not forced in any way. Some of them she had heard were mate-less and so were free to make a living how they so chose to. With no Mate ever to hunt them down, they were never short of a lover. Some of them liked being there, that she knew. She had heard them talk about how much fun they got to have at times. That place was at the very back of the pack, and she knew a lot of un-mated wolves used it. Her father had, several times a week, and he had told her to just stay away from it. Which she had; it was no place for a child that was a certainty. She sat before the pack's Matchmaker and smiled at her, held out her hands for the lady to take when asked to, and she saw the woman close her eyes and tilt her head this way and that way, frown a few times and then five minutes later. Amora opened her eyes and looked right at her. "I'm sorry, Ryder, I don't see a Mate in your future. Are I'm afraid, Mate-less." "Wh... What?" she'd stuttered, "No, that can't be right." "I'm sorry my child, I don't get things wrong. I have been doing this for a very long time. You are Mate-less." "I...it...can't be. I want a family... Why?" she could feel not just her own heart filling with pain, but that of her wolf Thorn as well. She shook her head, they lived very long lives up to a thousand years, and she was supposed to live for that long alone and by herself. It wasn't right, how could it be? "I'm sorry Ryder. I do not see children for you either." Amora looked at her and sighed heavily. "I am truly sorry to have to tell you this, I do not want to..." she saw actual pain pass across the woman's face, and then she just looked terribly sad "I also have to inform the Alpha of this, you understand." She watched Amora get up, and she was shown out through a back door, didn't show her out passed the others, out there in the waiting room. Ryder kind of just stood there at the back of the house not knowing what to do, what was she supposed to do now? She wished right at this minute that, that woman had never told her. She would rather have been told she had to wait a hundred years or more. At least then there would have been some hope for her and Thorn. But no Mate! Destined to be alone for the rest of their lives, they didn't like being alone now. How were they going to

handle that? She finally moved on and away from the matchmaker's place, with the knowledge of a bleak, lonely future laid out before her. She made her way to the house she'd grown up in and sat down on the couch. As she tried to fully absorb the news and deal with this newfound devastation. Ryder took herself off to training that afternoon and threw herself right into it. This was it, all she was good for: fighting, so she would do what Alpha Franco had told her, rank up and become an Elite Warrior. She would fight for the pack and attend more training and then likely be sent off on all allied assistance where there was war for one pack or another. She was at her house a few days later staring up at the darkened ceiling. Dawn would be here soon, and she had been called to have a meeting with Alpha Franco right after his own training finished. She had to be at his office at 7am this morning. He'd now been informed by the matchmaker of her plight, and he wanted to discuss her future with her. It was not something she wanted to discuss. She hadn't even told her friends the truth yet, didn't even know how to voice those very words out loud to herself when alone in her home. So how could she tell others she was mate-less? When they'd all asked her about going to see the matchmaker, and when she was destined to meet her Mate, she had simply stated "it's not going to happen for a very long time, over a century." They'd not asked questions, known better. Her tone of voice would have conveyed she was unhappy about it. How could she be happy about having to wait that long? Though it had been a lie, even as she'd spoken those words to her closest friends; lied right to their faces. Inside of her mind the words 'it could be a thousand years until your lonely death' had echoed. Two of her friends were due to get their mates on the next coming full moon. They were so excited about it, went on and on about who they thought it might be, were they from this pack or another, talked about what they hoped they would get, an all-buffed-up warrior for one and the other dreamed of a ranked member. She couldn't even be happy for them, wanted to be but just couldn't be. At least she didn't turn 18 until after this full moon. She wouldn't even feel it set, though the one after that, and then everyone after that for the rest of her life, was going to nearly kill her and Thorn, she thought sadly. Already she wished there was a way they didn't have to ever feel it. She nor her wolf wanted to feel that first one they knew was coming; it was likely going to fill them with pain.