

Book 1 Chapter 18

AXEL

A WEEK LATER

I sigh as I stare back at myself in the mirror.

This has to be the longest week of my life, and today is my birthday.

I could feel Mace pondering around in my head. He has been in a mood since we came back home. He wanted to nd Verity, but our father had other ideas. We threw ourselves into the Alpha duties he had placed on us and avoided making contact with anyone.

I know I should be happy when I meet my mate, but my mind is mainly on Verity. I am still looking for her.

Mace wants to know if she is our mate, and so do I, but that will have to wait till after this evening.

I have been stuck and unable to get out of town for a whole week as the deal I was supposed to deal with has been put on hold until after my birthday.

This evening is my party, which my family had arranged for me. They invited three packs close by to attend.

Everyone believes I will nd my mate today, but I don't think so.

The more my mind ponders over Verity, the more my heart aches for her.

I was an ass. Everything I did was cold and heartless; I should have stayed with her after we hooked up and made her feel special, but when you're a werewolf, mates are the only ones that can ignite your insides, the only ones you have to be with for the rest of your life and all I could think about was Verity in that way.

"Enough," growled Mace as he moved closer. His mood was still the same.

"We will go to this stupid party," he muttered. "And we will see if we can nd our mate. If she's not there, we are looking for little human."

I looked back at him and nodded.

We agreed regarding Verity and our mate, but things were getting more confusing by the second.

I heard a light tap on my door as the person opened it slowly.

I didn't look back as I knew who it was; he had been with me every day since we returned home.

"You ready, man," Dixon asked as he looked at me. I caught the look he gave me.

I gave him a slight nod.

Dixon offered to look for Verity for me, but I had to have him with me. He was my soon-to-be Beta and needed to learn the ropes.

"Let's get this over with," I said, turning around to face him.

Mace grumbled something, but I didn't catch it.

Dixon smiled.

"Try to have some fun," he said. "You never know; you may nd your mate."

I stared at him for a moment but didn't say anything.

Would I nd my mate?

Was Verity an obsession?

I shook my questions away.

I needed to concentrate on this evening.

Dixon and I left my room and headed down to the grand hall.

The party was starting, and all the guests were arriving.

I walked over to my parents and put on a fake smile.

My father smiled.

"Son," he said.

I nodded.

"Now, look around," he said, his eyes boring into mine. "You may nd your mate tonight."

I didn't say anything. I could feel my father's gaze as I looked around the room.

I knew my father thought something was wrong, as he had asked many times over the last week, as my moods had been all over the place. I haven't mentioned Verity as I don't want him to think less of me for sleeping with a human and even catching feelings for her.

My father is old school. He knows I'm not a virgin but never asks questions.

I keep my eyes on the people walking into the grand hall, making eye contact with every woman that stares at me.

I felt nothing.

A FEW HOURS LATER

The party is in full swing, and I am sitting at a table away from everyone.

I stare out as I watch everyone enjoying themselves.

No one who has turned up here is my mate.

I have had some women come up to me and try it on, but I pushed them all away.

My mate is not here.

Mace has gone to sleep and has even blocked me as he got fed up with the whole woman that has come up to us, trying it on. I had to hold him back a few times.

My mind wonders if Verity is truly my mate.

The thought of her being my mate was making me lose it.

I felt a hand on my shoulder, making me look up to see Dixon and Don pull up chairs by my side.

"What are you doing over here?" asked Don. "You should be celebrating; it's your birthday. Your mate might be one of these lucky, stunning ladies."

I stare at him as his eyes wander onto the dance oor.

"She's not here," I said, making him look back at me with a frown. "I can't smell her scent, and I didn't want this in the rst place."

Don stared, but it was Dixon who spoke.

"Do you want to make arrangements to nd her?" he asked, which made me look at him.

I knew who he was on about Verity.

I gave him a nod.

"Who are you talking about?" asked Don, looking confused.

I looked at him.

I had to tell him I would need his help, and lately, he has shown me what he is like as a Gamma.

"If I tell you something," I said, "You can't tell my father until I nd her."

Don stared at me and nodded.

"Every time I was going to the town on business, I was hooking up with a human," I said as I watched his eyes widen.

"You think she could be your mate," he said.

I nodded.

"The problem is," I said, glancing at Dixon, who gave me a nod to carry on, and I looked back at Don. "I hurt her. I mentioned that I would be looking for my mate after this weekend, and I won't be coming back."

Don stared.

"I was an ass," I muttered as I looked at him.

"You did right by telling her," he said, surprising me. "I take it you told her all about our kind."

I nodded.

Don stared and sighed.

"So, we are planning to go to town for you to nd out after this," he asked, looking between Dixon and me.

I felt Dixon's eyes on me.

"That's another problem," I said, which made Don look at me confused. "What's the problem?"

I sighed.

"Verity, that's her name," I said; her name sounded much better on my mouth. "She left."

Don's eyebrows scrunched together.

"What do you mean she left?" he asked.

"She left," I said. "She packed up her belongings and left. I have no clue where she has gone."

Don looked at me and frowned.

"Why would she have gone?" he asked.

"I think she left about Axel, lover boy here, gave her false hope," Dixon piped in, which made me growl.

I stared at him, but he shrugged. Staying quiet, I looked up to nd my father heading toward me.

"Don't mention any of this to him," I muttered. "We will leave tomorrow to look for her."

They both nodded but looked around the room, away from my father.

My father came over and stood before me.

"Son," he said. "Why aren't you celebrating? Have you found your mate?"

I stood up, fed up with this whole night.

I shook my head.

"She's not here," I said, "I'm not in the mood for this; I'm going to bed."

I moved away, but my father touched my arm to stop me.

"Axel," he murmured, but I shook my head and looked at him.

"Dad," I said, "I'm not in the mood for this," circling my gure to the grand hall, "I didn't want a party in the rst place. I didn't want a fuss."

My father stared at me.

"I'm going to bed," I said. "You and everyone else have a good night. I will see you in the morning for more of my Alpha duties."

I stepped away and felt my father's hand leave my arm. I walked away, feeling eyes on me as I went. I didn't want any of this.

All I wanted was to nd Verity and know she was safe.

I walked through the grand hall, headed outside, opened the doors, and headed toward the stairs. I didn't want to see anyone.

Not even my own family.

Tomorrow, I will tell them the truth and go from there, but one thing is for sure, I am searching for Verity, and I will make her my mate.