Chapter 7: Her Dreamy Dalton

Part II: An Ill-advised Invitation

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Zoe’s POV

Chloe and Dalton did not notice it but I did. Zachery was not amused at all by this new development. He looked furious. I could see the gears turning in his head as he deduced his next step. Gamma Zachery was clinical and my mate, Beta Dalton was comical. I recalled how frightened I had been the days leading up to Dalton’s phasing. I was so scared I would not be his fated mate. We had been sneaking around before the ceremony, stealing kisses and tender moments together. I would honestly never forget the night Dalton first phased.

The full moon was glorious in all her splendour, surrounded by countless twinkling stars. There was a chill in the air as if the wind knew something I didn’t. I went to my bedroom window as if summoned and there he was, a huge brown wolf, his coat shimmering in the moonlight. The wolf looked at me. I knew those grey eyes anywhere. Dalton. I was not afraid of him. I carefully climbed out of my bedroom window and used the latticework as a ladder. My bare feet landed on dewy grass. When I turned around the wolf was mere inches from me. He began to shift. His fur was sucked into his skin. He stood on his hind legs. His bones rearranged themselves, his snout shortened, his paws grew fingers and toes. I had never seen anything like it. In a matter of seconds, Dalton was standing before me, towering over me. I tried to keep my eyes on his face. Dalton smirked. Werewolves tended to be comfortable with nudity. They had to be. My heart was racing. Was I the one? Was that why he came or was it to tell he had found another? Was he here to break up with me for his new mate? My heart threatened to cleave in two.

“Zoe,” he whispered as if he was now learning my name.

“Yeah,” I mumbled, fidgeting nervously and hugging myself. My thin night gown did not provide much warmth.

Dalton was staring at me so intently. He caressed my cheek with his hand. His palm was rough. He closed the distance between us and took me in his arms, shielding me from the cold.

“Zoe,” he murmured into my hair, “my Zoe, my mate.”

Relief washed over me. My heart was beating erratically. In his arms, I felt safe, I felt whole. Dalton held my chin turning my face upwards to look at him. His lips met mine. I shivered but not because of the chill. I knew what came next. Dalton had been convinced from the start that we were fated and he had prepared me for this. He broke our kiss and began trailing the tip of his nose along my jaw and down the side of my neck.

“Are you ready to spend forever with me as my mate, my little human?” he whispered, his breath tickling my neck.

“Yes,” I said. “I love you.”

Dalton’s face lit up. I had never said those words to him before although he had said them to me.

“I love you, my little human, my pretty little mate,” he whispered into my ear before he bared his canines and bit into the tender flesh of my neck. I waited for the pain but all I felt was pleasure, coursing throughout my body, as Dalton marked me, granting me immortality. The edges of my vision blurred until I was limp in his arms. I woke up in my bed alone as the morning dawned. I panicked. Had I just dreamt Dalton was still mine? Please let it be real, I thought to myself. I leapt out of bed and ran to my floor-length mirror. The mark was there on my neck. It was shaped like a crescent and had a silvery glow to it. I used my own fingernail to scratch my cheek. The angry pink line glowed a little and then completely disappeared, healed in seconds. I squealed.

A chuckle from behind me made me jump. “Satisfied?” Dalton asked, striding out of my bathroom. He was wearing clothes now.

“What are you doing here? I thought you left,” I said, beaming at him.

“I stayed all night in case you needed me,” he said simply.

“Earth to Zoe, come in please,” Dalton’s voice interrupted my ruminating.

“Huh, sorry,” I mumbled. I had gotten a little lost in that memory. Zachery and Chloe did not seem bothered. They were making out, Chloe straddling Zachery, her palms cupping his face and his hands on her waist.

“What’re you thinking about so intently?” Asked Dalton, chuckling.

“You,” I said truthfully.

“You’re ignoring me in reality so you can daydream about me?” Asked Dalton incredulously. His face broke into a grin. “Makes sense, I am pretty dreamy,” he said, running his hands through his silky shoulder-length ash brown hair. True but it was annoying to hear him say it. All the wolves were pretty cocky. I rolled my eyes. Dalton chuckled. He led me away from Zack and Chloe. The Gold Manor was a maze of luxurious rooms that featured marble and hardwood floors, crystal chandeliers and Impressionist paintings on the wall. There was even an indoor pool and an elevator. The werewolves in Ambrosia protected the town and were always rewarded handsomely for their efforts. The Pack wolves also owned several local businesses including Ambrosia Hotel. Thus, Jessie, Zack and my Dalton were all wealthy and lived in sprawling mansions. Before Dalton and I got together, I used to think they were all pretty stuck-up, hot but stuck-up. I chuckled to myself.

“No secrets between mates,” said Dalton roughly as we reached one of the guest bedrooms. He shut the door behind us. I heard the lock click. Before I could say anything, Dalton’s lips were against mine. He pushed me onto the bed, pinning me underneath him. I instinctively wrapped my legs around his waist. He felt so strong. I squirmed underneath him as he rained kisses down my neck. He bit the spot where he had marked me months ago and then licked the bite. He undid his tie and blindfolded me with it and returned his lips to my mouth. His movements were so swift, I barely had time to register what was happening. I was unexpectedly plunged into darkness. I gasped allowing Dalton to deepen the kiss. In fact, I allowed my Dalton to do whatever he wanted with me until I came apart in his arms.

Dalton’s POV

My mate was motionless in my arms except for the rising and falling of her chest. I watched her sleep peacefully. She was my everything. I could not tolerate a world where we would not be allowed to be together. It was rare to have a human mate but it was accepted and thankfully we were able to gift them immortality so they could spend forever with us. She would never have super strength or speed but she healed as fast as I did and would never age. I smirked to myself. She still had the blindfold on.

Jessie’s POV

Training was brutal but it helped to clear my head. My father, the current Alpha, insisted that every wolf in the Ambrosia Wolf Pack should learn how to fight while not in wolf form. After sparing practice, my father and I went for a walk to the river that ran through our property. Our Manor’s grounds included several acres of woodlands. I watched my father phase into a massive wolf. His fur was as black as a raven's wings and his eyes were as blue as the sky. Everyone said I was just a younger version of my father. I hoped that meant I would be a great alpha like he was. All my life all I cared about was the Pack and werewolf traditions. Now I was so conflicted. She consumed most of my waking thoughts and I was even beginning to dream about her. My little witch. I had been looking forward to becoming alpha my whole life and now I was dreading it because it meant I needed a Luna. I did not want to hurt Jamie. Every hair on her head was precious to me but she was a witch and my wolf would prompt me to find my fated mate.

"You ok, son?" came my father's deep voice.

I nodded.

"Dad, were you interested in anyone else before you phased and saw that mom was your mate?"

My father chuckled. "Before I phased, your mom was the prettiest she-wolf I had ever seen and after I phased, she became even more beautiful."

"You clearly sensed me coming," came my Mom's voice, her tone amused.

I rolled my eyes at Dad. He must have smelled her nearby. She had come to surprise us with a plate of snacks. I sat on the riverbank, grabbed a sandwich and mindlessly ate it in two bites. My father transformed back into a man and dressed quickly. He sat on a rock nearby and my mother sat on his lap.

"We really did date before he phased," my mother said.

"What about people who have to break up after they find their real mate?" I asked.

"It won't hurt because you'll be so overjoyed to find your fated mate," said Dad simple.

"It'll hurt the other person though," I countered.

"Until the other person finds their own mate," my mother added. "Everyone has someone. That's why wolf culture allows for such a happy existence. We have good social bonds."

Oh no, I got my mom started on wolf culture. It would hurt the other person because she's not a werewolf and has no mate, I said to myself. I dared not say that to my mother or father. They were never overly strict with me but taking up the position of Alpha and naming my future rightful Luna was untouchable stuff. Definitely not up for debate. I tried to push thoughts of Jamie out of my mind but they kept resurfacing. I could not stop picturing her shy gaze, her doe eyes, her long silky curls. She had felt so delicate in my arms and she had been as light as a feather when I lifted her. I groaned out loud by accident. Sh*t!

"What's wrong?" Asked Mom, breaking apart from her kiss with Dad. They acted like teenagers in love sometimes. I resisted the urge to roll my eyes, I smiled and shook my head.

"I'm fine, just thinking about my birthday."

"You're going to make a great alpha son," said my Dad, his voice cracking a little. My Mom's eyes were sparkling with tears as she swelled up with pride. Great, I thought to myself darkly. I was either going to break my parents hearts or hers.

Jamie's POV

He saved me on Monday, kissed me on Tuesday and ignored me on Wednesday and Thursday. It was finally Friday, the day of the ceremony and I was questioning whether or not I should go even though my magical disguise was ready. After all the steamy stuff that happened between us, I was expecting to be greeted with enthusiasm but Jessie had been avoiding me since then and it was driving me crazy. I still wanted to see him phase though.

It was an important moment in his life and it mattered to me. He mattered to me. Everyone in our senior class had gathered to watch a movie in the theatre at Ambrosia High. It was our Friday afternoon treat before dismissal. I sat in the back by myself. I saw him walk in with his friends and their mates. I knew he sensed where I was. He was carefully avoiding my gaze. The air conditioner was turned up so high. I zipped up my jacket and put my hood on. It was my favourite jacket: an oversized fuzzy, black lantern sleeved jacket with pointed cat ears on the hood. Someone tugged on one of the cat ears. I glanced up. A girl laughed at me. She had a very high pitched laugh, like the tinkling of bells. She was tall and willowy with waist-length, thick, straight red hair, green almond-shaped eyes, pale rosy skin and tons of freckles. She was striking. I recognised her after a few moments.

“You used to work for my grandmother, right?” I asked.

“Guilty,” said the girl and she laughed that tinkling laugh again.

“May I sit here?” said the girl, sitting before I could say anything. I did not mind the company but I was shocked. Everyone at my school usually avoided me except Jessie but he had recently joined the masses in ignoring me.

“I'm Evangeline Urn, but everyone calls me Eva,” said the girl.

“Jamie Jaded,” I replied.

"Everyone knows who you are, silly. The Maiden of the Ambrosia Witch Coven.”

“Oh, yeah,” I said sheepishly.

“It must be overwhelming, Maiden Jamie,” said Evangeline.

“No, please don’t call me that,” I said. “Just Jamie, please.”

Evangeline cackled and covered her mouth with both hands as if I had something truly scandalous. I noticed her nails were led to be pointed at the tips like little daggers. I turned to look at where Jessie and his friends were sitting. They were up front and dead centre. Zachery had his arm around Chloe. Zoe and Dalton were whispering to each there. Jessie sat in the middle of the two couples. He looked disgruntled. He was not a very happy birthday boy. The movie started. It was about a human family whose crippling debt forced them into a life of organised crime to help pay off a couple demanding loan sharks. I kept debating when or if to approach him. I had a birthday present for Jessie and I would have to be in disguise at his party tonight so school was my last chance to give him the gift.

“It’s so ridiculous,” whispered Evangeline conspiratorially.

“The movie?”I asked. I thought the film was good actually. Eva cackled softly.

“No, silly, the way the people at this school worship the werewolves,” she said with an eye roll. “All anyone can talk about is that stupid ceremony for the new alpha tonight.”

“Ohhh, that’s tonight,” I said, feigning ignorance.

“Yeah,” Eva said. “Of course no witches or wizards are invited but all the humans and werewolves are going.”

“Wow,” I said.

“Yeah, and he is going to reveal his Luna after he becomes Alpha. The new Beta and new Gamma already have their mates. PDA Central down there,” Eva said, glaring at Jessie, Zachery, Chloe, Zoe and Dalton. Their backs were turned.

“You said reveal the new Luna? He has to find her first,” I said trying to keep my tone nonchalant.

“He already did,” Eva said. “He won’t know for sure until tonight.”

“Who is she?” I asked, panic rising inside me.

“Some she-wolf from one of the neighbouring towns. She’s the daughter of another alpha. A perfect match honestly for that flea-bitten fur ball.” Eva cackled madly, not bothering to keep her voice low this time. Dozens of heads whipped around to stare at her including Zachery, Cohoe, Zoe and Dalton. Jessie kept his head facing forwards. Did he really have a Luna in mind already? I felt like I could not breathe. Was he cheating on her when we kissed? I felt the temperature in the room drop. It was become colder with each passing second. Was that me? I got up and left the theatre before I made the air conditioner explode or something.

I stood just outside the theatre just trying to catch my breath. I was doubled over with my palms over my knees. The theatre door creaked and out walked the alleged two-timer. He seemed surprised to see me right by the door.

“Hey! Are you ok?” He asked noticing my position.

I straightened up. I could breathe again. “You’re talking to me, now?”

Jessie sighed.

“What’s her name?” I mumbled.

“Whose name?” Jessie asked

“Your future Luna,” I said.

“I wouldn’t know yet,” said Jessie, a pained expression on his face. “I’ll know tonight at 11:11pm if I see her after I phase.”

That was the first time I had ever heard him acknowledge finding his real mate.

“You don’t have someone in mind. The neighbouring alpha’s daughter?”

Jessie chuckled. “I would hope not since all the neighbouring alphas are first cousins with my father.”

I felt a small sense of relief at that but his mate could still be among the she-wolves right here at school. Maybe he avoided me to spare me the full force of the inevitable pain. I pulled a small box from my pocket and handed it to Jessie.

“Happy birthday, Jessie,” I said halfheartedly. I stood on my tiptoes to kiss his cheek. His skin felt so warm despite how chilly the theatre had been.

“I had no idea what to get you,” I admitted. Jessie looked genuinely pleased with this turn of events. He opened the box to reveal a gold necklace with a pendant in the shape of the letter J.

“I knew you’d like gold over silver. You don’t really have a choice being a werewolf and all,” I continued awkwardly.

Jessie shocked me by putting the necklace on immediately. He tucked the pendant into his shirt and put the empty box in his pocket. He looked pensive.

“The J is for me, Jessie, or for you, Jamie?” He asked.

I had not even thought of that. I automatically picked it for his initial, J for Jessie. I blushed now realising it could be interpreted much differently. I did not know what had come over be but instead of saying it was for his name, I said coyly, “It’s whichever you want it to be.”

A sly smile formed on Jessie’s face. Uh oh. In the blink of an eye, he pinned me against the theatre door he had just walked out of. I silently prayed no one else needed to leave that room right now. His hands were in my hair and his lips were on mine, his tongue gently exploring my mouth. It was a good thing I had not gotten him a game console instead, otherwise I’d be pregnant by now the way this guy reacted to things.

Jessie’s POV

Trying to stay away from Jamie was torture but I was doing it for her. I did not want to hurt her. Despite me ignoring her these past couple days, she had still gotten me a birthday present and brought it to school since she was not invited to my birthday party. The girl I was crazy about, the girl in my arms, the girl I was passionately kissing, the girl whose initial I was wearing around my neck was not invited to the most important event of my life thus far. My life made no sense. I broke our kiss but held her at arms length, my hands gripping her upper arms. We locked eyes.

“You have to come tonight,” I said before I could stop myself.

“Come where?” Jamie mumbled, confused.

“On my face,” I said.

“WHAT?!” Said Jessie.

I could not help myself. I laughed.

“To my party, Jamie, to the alpha ceremony,” I said. “To watch me phase.”

Jamie had still not recovered from my crude joke.

“Ok,” she said simply. I beamed at her. I kissed her now swollen lips. I nibbled on them a bit. She recoiled a little.

“Sorry,” I whispered, rubbing my thumb gently across her lips. She stood on tiptoe again and gave me a peck on the lips. I squeezed her waist, unwilling to let her go. She seemed extremely flustered about something.

“You won’t need an invitation ok,” I told her. “I’ll inform my guards to look out especially for you. It’s formal ok. It starts at seven and ends at midnight but like I said I’ll phase at 11:11pm so you can come late if you want as long as you reach in time to see me phase.”

“Ok,” she mumbled. I could not resist. I kissed her sweet lips again. Her scent was intoxicating, like I was holding a bouquet of flowers instead of a little frightened witch.

“Don’t be scared, ok,” I told her. “I’m the alpha and I won’t let anyone hurt you. You’re my guest.”

You’re mine in general, I thought to myself. What had come over me?

Jamie’s POV

I was terried. I was already attending his party with Dalton’s invitation in disguise. Now he wanted me there as myself. Both the new alpha and the new beta would be expecting me now. I would be there but I would be unrecognisable. I could not just walk right in, like a lamb in a lions’ den. A witch among werewolves. That was dangerous. The alpha and beta both invited you though, I thought to myself. Would the other wolves cross their newly appointed alpha and beta. What about the old alpha and beta? What if their parents were horried?

It was all too much. I needed time to think but Jessie did not seem like he was willing to let me go anytime soon. He was acting strangely even for him, like a starving man in front of a buffet. I did feel a small sense of relief. No matter what, before midnight, before this day was over, I would know if Jessie’s mate already resided in Ambrosia or belonged to his pack.