

The Alpha King's Human Mate by HC Dolores

Chapter 12

"If every fool wore a crown, we should all be kings."@

Proverb

Silence descended on the room like a thick blanket and the only sounds that could be heard were the clomping of boots.

The Alpha King was a tall, broad-shouldered man that stood at least 6'4. I could tell it was the same man from the painting – he had the same dark eyes and russet skin, but his hair was thinner, grayer and his face was stern.

He wore some kind of dark blue military uniform with gold buttons and the Bardot crest emblazoned on the front. "Well, it looks like I'm late to my own dinner party," he said, stopping in front of his chair. His voice was far deeper than I thought it would be and it left an unpleasant knot in my stomach.

This guy is as intimidating as it gets. 2

Almost immediately, Sebastian, Lily, Aakesh, Ezra, and even Angel stood up, their chairs clanking against the marble floors. I scrambled up after them and hoped that the King hadn't noticed my delay. Everyone sat back down once he was seated.

Why did nobody tell me there's an entire royal etiquette at play here?

"You're always late, Alaric," another voice boomed, and I turned to see the other middle-aged man who had entered behind the King. He was just a hair shorter than the King but he was even brawnier in the chest and shoulders. He adorned the same dark blue military uniform but this one lacked the Bardot crest.

Unlike the Alpha King, there was nothing stern or hostile about this man. His

greying red hair stuck out like a sore thumb and his eyes and smile were kind. He approached the chair at the other head of the table. Nobody stood up for him. O

"So are you, Beta Williams," the Alpha King grinned, "But I don't hold it against

you. I'd like a glass of wine please – and one for my Beta too." Although he hadn't addressed anyone directly, another kitchen staff member seemed to materialize

out of thin air with two glasses of red wine.

“Now, let’s get on with the first course please,” the Alpha King clapped his hands together, “I’d like to meet all my wonderful guests.” Although he was smiling, his piercing stare put me on edge as his eyes raked around the room.

1

Several more kitchen staff entered the room, trays of roast chicken and raw fish in their hands. They scooped it out on our plates and I tried not to grimace at the fish. I’d never been able to stomach raw fish, not even sushi, but it didn’t feel like I had

a choice here.

I dove into the roast chicken first and it was more decadent than I’d imagined. The flavor from the chicken and its lemon sauce practically exploded on my tongue.

I can certainly get used to eating like this.

“You must be Aakesh,” the Alpha King turned to the Indian boy and I exhaled

quietly. I was glad that introductions were starting on the other side of the room.

“Yes, Your Majesty,” Aakesh smiled, “I’m honored to be in your presence tonight.” If Aakesh was nervous that he was bearing the full weight of the Alpha King’s scrutinizing gaze, he certainly didn’t show it.

The King continued to look at Aakesh for a moment and then he smiled. “Yes, as am I. Your father and I go way back. I’ve saved his life a few times, you know.” He took a long sip out of his wine glass and then turned his stare to Ezra. “And you

must be Ezra of the Lock Heart Pack.”

Ezra wasn’t quite as composed as Aakesh was. He seemed to squirm underneath the King’s stare, and for the first time tonight, I felt a twinge of satisfaction.

Good.

Now he knows what it feels like when someone is trying to intimidate you.

“Yes, Your Majesty. My father has talked about you quite often,” Ezra smiled but it didn’t meet his eyes, “He thinks very fondly of his visit to the castle five years ago.”

“Doe’s he?” The Alpha King took another sip of wine and swirled the liquid around his glass, “I must confess, I hardly recall him. He was not a memorable man, much like his son.” (3)

Beta Williams left out a loud guffaw from the end of the table.

Ezra's smile dropped instantly and he gaped at the king like a fish. "Sorry?"

Well, nobody could accuse this dinner party of being boring.

The King didn't acknowledge him, he'd already turned his attention to his next victim: Angel. Although I wasn't the one under scrutiny, I definitely felt sympathy for the small girl. Angel's eyes were still on her lap.

"Look at me, child," the King's voice was stern but not hostile.

Slowly, Angel looked up, her face flushed red and her doe eyes darting around the room.

The Alpha King grinned widely, his pearly whites on display. "Yes, thank you," he said, "I prefer to make eye contact with those I'm talking to. You are from the Blue Eclipse pack. Angel, yes?"

"Yes, Your Majesty," her voice was as timid as ever but she kept her eyes on the King.

"You are astonishingly beautiful," The King remarked, and Angel blushed even redder, "That is all an Alpha can hope for when he has a daughter, that she will be beautiful and submissive. If he is really lucky, she will also have a strong mate."

The delicious roast chicken began to taste sour in my mouth. 1

Why are you surprised, Clark? You're in the wolf den.

—

as submissive baby-

7

You've always known how these people have viewed women makers who need protecting. This is just the first time you're hearing someone say it so

blatantly.

I expected Angel to continue blushing, but for the first time that night, she spoke without prompting. "I have not met my mate yet," Angel said, "But I hope I will soon. My father said there would be many strong Alphas here, so I'm hopeful that I will meet him. I look forward to pleasing my mate." She smiled gently and I could

tell she meant every word. 7

There was a part of me that wanted to shake Angel until she saw how insane her own words sounded, but I knew it wasn't her fault. When you spend your entire life learning that the sky is purple, you're going to think it's purple, regardless of what anyone else tells you.

"It's so charming to meet a female wolf who understands her place," The Alpha King smiled, "I'm sure you will make a great mate for someone, dear." Angel practically preened under his praise. O

"Do you feel the same?" The Alpha King turned, his stare falling onto Lily. "As the daughter of a powerful Alpha like Marcus Bellevue, I assume he's taught you the importance of being a good mate."

My heart sped up. I was nervous for Lily. She hadn't expressed a lot of excitement as the thought of meeting her mate and she was far from the docile type.

Please don't say anything that could get you hurt, Lily.

To my surprise, Lily kept her cool. "Of course," she said, giving the King the same smile she'd give the elders whenever they tried to give her unsolicited advice. "Both my father and mother have taught me how important a mate bond is. I look forward to the day I get to experience that."

The Alpha King chuckled. "Yes, yes, I'm sure your father has a lot to say about how serious mate bonds are. After all, we're all looking at evidence of just how seriously he took his own mate bond." 17

The Alpha King's eyes fell to me.

Great.

Guess it's my turn.