

## 5 - Alpha Dracos

(Alpha Dracos)

There was something I couldn't shake about her. I didn't understand it. I thought she might have been my mate based on the way I'd felt when I looked at her. However, it wasn't as strong as I had expected, yet it was far stronger than anything I've ever felt.

She was beautiful, but it was more than that. Of course, I noticed her stark beauty.

But, it was more than her soft black hair. It was the way it tumbled over her shoulder and I almost reached out to see if it was as soft as it looked.

It was more than the way her wide light green eyes looked when they locked on mine for a second. It was the way I felt my world shift when they did.

She didn't seem affected by me, not in the way that everyone always was. Even when I reigned in my aura I knew that it was still a lot. She didn't even seem to notice me and kept looking past me no matter how many times I tried to start a conversation.

She also didn't throw herself at me like many women I met did, even some that were mated. I wasn't cocky, but I would say my composure was well suited to how great I was at, well, everything.

I couldn't help study her, the way that she chewed on her bottom lip and the way that her eyebrows scrunched a bit when she frowned.

How did she not feel it?

When she told me that she was the next Luna I thought she was joking. The classically beautiful blonde seemed to command the attention of the future Alpha Norman, Nolan, Napoleon? I had no idea and I genuinely didn't care.

Even though I was the guest of honor it was that guy's birthday and his mate and future Luna should always be seated next to him.

I wanted to stay longer and try to engage her in conversation, yet again, but I got called away for an important meeting with another pack that had been evading me for weeks.

That was an event that I didn't want to attend in the first place, and I didn't want to leave. Because of her.

I don't even know why I attended that event, it was just a birthday of a future Alpha of a medium-sized pack. They were under our technical jurisdiction even though the royals were more of a title, but I never would have come to something that insignificant.

But there was something telling me to go, and I wondered if it was because of her.

But it couldn't be because she was mated to another and it didn't matter that I couldn't stop thinking about her, she belonged to someone else.

I had to know even though it was too late. I had to find a way to get her out of my mind.

So, I accepted the invitation to her Luna Ceremony where they would take over the Alpha and Luna positions at the same time. My heart hurt to think about her socially becoming his, but she already was. She wore his mark.

I just had to see her one last time so that I could show my wolf that it was nothing, that what awoke in me was a urge, probably from the drinks I had that night.

I just had to put it behind me, I had to see her to do that.

Thoughts of her clouded my mind as I was driven back to The Blue Ridge Pack. How her full lips would taste, how her soft hair would feel tangled in my hair, what she was thinking when she furrowed her brows, what the smile meant that she gave to others that didn't seem genuine.

What was I thinking? She was mated, about to become a Luna, and I was lusting over someone that already belonged to and accepted someone else.

Even if it made me irrationally jealous of another man, and jealousy wasn't a feeling I was familiar with.

"Alpha Hugo, Luna Natalie," I paid my respects to the current Alpha and Luna, even if they were about to hand it over.

"Alpha Dracos," They both nodded their head in a partial bow.

"It is an absolute honor to have you here," The Luna gushed, gripping her mate's arm.

"I'm sorry I had to leave last time so early, something came up."

The Alpha nodded, "Of course we understand. We appreciate you coming back again, if you have time later I'm sure my son would love to speak with you about future relations."

"I'll see if I can fit it in,"

"Great," He gave me a tight smile, I didn't care if he thought I was blowing them off, I was.

I nodded and turned, I wanted to get this over with. The best-case scenario was that what I felt was a one-time thing, but I knew deep down that wouldn't be the case. What I felt, what I knew wasn't going to disappear. It would probably only intensify, but I had to know.

The ceremony was the same boring thing I always avoided.

The new Alpha Nolan walked to the stage next to his father. Anticipation built in me as they called the Luna.

My eyes were fixed on the other side of the stage where I assumed she would come up. Every part of me was fixated on it. I didn't know if it was anticipation or dread, I was worried I would feel those things again.

I had to shake it, but I was already anticipating seeing her raven black hair that seemed to react light itself every time she moved. I craved her somehow icy green eyes fixated on me, even though they only were for a brief second.

Shit, I shouldn't have come.

I was vaguely aware that they announced the Luna when a figure started walking towards the stage. My heart seemed to stop in anticipation tinged with dread.

I didn't know if I felt relief or confusion as the tall leggy blonde I remembered thinking was the future Luna the last time I was here walked on the stage.

Her stomach was swollen and she placed a hand over her white floor-length dress. I didn't notice anything else about her. She didn't mean shit to me.

Was Willa, I found out her name, as soon as I left the pack the last time, was she lying?

She wasn't sitting next to Nolan at his birthday party but her eyes didn't leave him for more than a second that night. She said she was the future Luna but was she maybe in love with that new Alpha? Maybe she was his ex who got pushed aside when he found his true mate. I've seen that happen before far too often.

It didn't make sense but I didn't know her.

"Camilla has been in Nolan's life for longer than anyone," Luna Natalie smiled at the blonde and her son, "Not fated mates, but mates nonetheless,"

What?

"We are honored and elated to have Camilla follow in my footsteps as Luna and have her and my son's heir carry on the Hemming line," Her eyes misted over, it looked like genuine emotion.

These things always got so damn emotional for no reason.

"Son," Alpha Hugo shook his son's hand.

I didn't pay attention to the rest. I've heard it a million times before.

My attention was on Nolan and Camilla, she didn't stop touching her stomach. We knew she was pregnant and it seemed like a show at this point.

They seemed to be in love or at least infatuation, but it was rare for such a young Alpha to take a chosen mate, I took over as Alpha when I was nineteen, five years ago, and never found mine. My mate would make me stronger, would make the pack stronger when I found her. But I didn't need someone to help me. I had my Beta and Gamma for that until she arrived.

I wondered why he felt the need to take a chosen mate instead of waiting for his real one. But the bigger thought was how Willa played into this all or how she thought she did.

The formalities dragged on, I swear some of these people just liked to hear themselves talk.

Finally, when they dragged it on long enough it ended and I was able to mingle.

Mingle was an interesting word to me, most people avoided me. They all stared but gave me a wide berth. I knew part of it had to do with the aura that leaked out of me even when I kept it reigned in, the other part was the novelty of having a prince among them.

Usually, I didn't mind. It kept people away unless they needed something, or I needed something from them.

"Alpha Nolan, Congratulations," I shook his hand, he had a weak handshake.

"Prince Alpha Dracos," He nodded, idiot. I removed my hand from his grasp.

"Where is Willa?" I asked him, I didn't have the time nor any want to beat around the bush here, especially when it came to her.

He scanned my face taking a step back.

"Oh," Realization settled on his face, "You were here on my birthday."

I nodded once, interesting he would have forgotten that little detail unless he was pretending.

He swallowed. I found it was better to let others do the talking, especially in my presence. They usually gave away everything I needed and more just to fill the uncomfortable silence.

"You didn't hear," He looked at me again.

"Obviously not or I wouldn't be asking," I fixed him with a bored stare I didn't have to fake.

"We, well, we decided to go separate ways." He wrung his hands, a bad sign for an Alpha even though he was only one for mere minutes.

"What does that mean? I don't appreciate riddles," His shoulders fell for a split second and I savored it, but I didn't let him know that. I kept myself composed as I always did, it was second nature to me.

"We rejected each other."

That took me by surprise. I felt my composure crack for an instant. Willa and Nolan were fated mates and chose to reject each other? That was rare, I never met anyone who did that in my lifetime.

I understood why she would reject him. He wasn't unattractive, but he seemed aloof, definitely not the dominant Alpha male that I would expect. She was an absolute goddess, gorgeous in a way few were, but also attuned, smart and collected, with opinions.

Again, I was basing this off a few moments when she actually engaged with me. But from those fleeting moments, I knew he didn't deserve her.

"I'm sorry to hear that," For him, not her, "Any idea where she is now?" I would leave this monotonous party and go find her, see for once and for all if what I felt was real.

"I don't know," He shook his head, nodding to someone behind me.

"I'm still speaking to you," I directed his attention back to me.

"Yes, sir," He bowed his head again and I almost smirked, "She left, a few months ago but I don't know where."

She left?

That didn't sit well with me. I know it must be hard to face someone you rejected, especially the Alpha, but if it was truly mutual then why would she feel like she needed to leave?

His leggy blonde Luna came up to him snaking her arms around him.

"Oops, I don't want to poke you with my bump," She smiled up at him, "That wouldn't be good for the baby." She rubbed her stomach.

"It would be tragic," I replied before leaving them.

Their brief interaction wore me out and I had more questions than answers now.

If they truly rejected each other months ago, then how was he so comfortable taking a new Luna already? The pain of rejection I heard was immense, and to have her pregnant already.

It wasn't adding up, but I really didn't care about them enough to ask for more details.

The only person I cared about in the entirety of this damn pack was Willa Balfour and apparently, she wasn't even here anymore.