

Mystery of Fate: Luna Della's Second Chance –

Chapter 4

Della's POV

"I find my fated mate. I don't love you any more, Della." Kylian looked at me with a grimace, each word breaking my heart more than the last.

I suddenly opened my eyes and sat up screaming.

After a deep breath, my mind hazy and my chest desperate for air, I finally came to. It took an entire five minutes for me to properly calm down and realize it was just a dream.

I blinked a few times and rubbed my eyes, watching light stream into the room from a window by my bed. It illuminated a set of translucent silk curtains and fell on my face, wrapping me in warmth. Just outside the window was the familiar view of the family garden, and my pillow smelled of home and childhood memories. It was all enough to bring a tear to my eye.

I was home now. I offered the Moon Goddess a silent prayer, thanking Her for sending me to safety. Before I could fully recover from that nightmare, those memories of Kylian that still haunted me, the door to my room suddenly swung open.

I could tell he had just returned from the training grounds from the sound of his heavy armor grinding at the joints and edges with every step. Even without seeing who it was, out of the corner of my eye, I could already expect him to tower over me, his shoulders unbelievably broad and his footsteps carrying the weight of his unparalleled strength.

His hair was dark, though, with age, streaks of white had slowly crept in. And his appearance, powerful and resolute, matched the kind of man he

was. His dark eyes, his willful gaze, set atop a high nose and a tight-lipped expression, did most of the talking for him.

It was none other than my father, the Lycan King, to whom all Alphas knelt.

The strongest wolves revered him, and if given the opportunity, they would kiss the very ground he walked on. Seeing him, I couldn't hold back my tears any longer. Throwing off my blanket, I leaped out of bed and raised my arms, rushing toward him.

"Father!" With tears streaming down my face, he hugged me tightly and gently patted my back like he always did when I was a child.

"I swear, child, only the Goddess knows how disobedient you've been! Why, you are the Lycan King's most unruly child. I've sent you more emails and written more letters than I could even count, not knowing whether or not you've even read them. I hear you've been deliberately hiding from the men I sent to find you. How could you be so cold to your own father? To the Lycan King?"

He deliberately lowered his voice, maintaining a tone that lay somewhere between absconding me and lamenting as a father would over his child.

Despite his chiding, I knew that he loved me. He knew how much I was hurting and hated to see me suffer.

I fidgeted for a moment in his embrace—his hugs were always a little too tight—and loosened his arms just enough to put a hand on his broad chest. Then, I looked up at him in dismay, saying, "I was wrong, Father. I'm so sorry, but... Worry not, I'm okay. My wolf healed me."

"Wolves can only heal wounds sustained by the body, child. They can do little to mend a broken heart. I'll rip out that bastard's heart so that he may atone for what he's done to you!" Father growled, his deep voice beginning to rise in anger and a fire lighting in his eyes.

As if on cue, a few warriors waiting just past the open door revealed themselves and immediately saluted him, ready to carry out his next orders.

I recognized one of them to be a man touted as the bravest warrior appointed to the Lycan King's service. He was a man who couldn't understand a joke for the life of him and faithfully did whatever Father asked of him without question.

"Father, please. Whether or not I want him to hurt... That's my choice, remember?"

"Of course, my dear. I still remember that day you took your wolf on a run in the forest, only to return to me giddy with love. Imagine my shock back then that you claimed to decide to marry him even if he is not your fated mate! You hid your identity and pretended to be an Omega to marry him. And to think I would let you do such a thing just to spend your life with a bastard of a man. Regret weighs heavily on this old body of mine that I even humored your request, nevertheless supported you. It is easily the worst decision I have ever made."

"Don't be so hard on yourself. It was my fault for not listening to you, but that doesn't matter anymore. I'm back here to right that wrong." I looked up at his face, hoping I could help lift his mood, searching his grimace for the traces of a smile. Only then would I know that he'd reconsider his order to have Kylian executed.

I may have left him, but I didn't want him dead.

"Father, your little princess is back home now. Your sweet little Della is here, so don't be so angry anymore. I'm sure it scares her when you become like this, so be happy, okay? With our protection, no one will ever hurt her again." Jackson chimed in, having silently appeared sometime during our conversation.

My brother Jackson walked just past the door and leaned against the frame, looking at my father with a teasing expression. Then, he gave me a playful wink and crossed his fingers. It was a small gesture from when we were kids, signaling- "Let me handle this."

It felt so good to be home.

Dad turned at once and glared at Jackson. "Might I remind you that I *did not* agree to Della concealing her identity and marrying that bastard? At least not in the beginning! You were the one who coaxed me into it, constantly spoiling her and gushing about the beauty of the marriage! 'Would you keep your child from attaining pure love?' Do not act as if you had no hand in this, boy. If not for your help, your constant droning in my ear, would I have let her go off and get herself hurt?!"

"Don't be angry with me, dear Father. Della is young, and she should experience love in its entirety, both the good and the bad. After all, no matter what hurts her, we will always support her. No one could ask for a stronger family to stand by her side. But even if she does get hurt, you can't deprive her of it. These are valuable experiences," Jackson tried to explain, though not much could sway Father when he became like this.

He quickly averted his gaze under the pressure of his father's glowering and let out a defeated sigh. "Either way... It was my fault. I should have looked into that bastard before pushing to have Della be with him. She's a treasured part of our family, and we let her go."

I was so elated to see my dear father and brother again after all this time. I missed their banter so much over these three years, missed what it was like to see them so serious as they fretted over me. Though part of me wanted to laugh, I burst into tears at how much it hurt to be away from them.

"Father, Jackson, it's okay. I know I made a mistake. I was so young back then, and I thought that love would play out like a fairy tale. He chose me, after all. But over the past three years, I have come to learn

otherwise and have grown out of those foolish beliefs. I've already left him for good, or at least made it clear that I no longer want to be with him. So long as he accepts that, we won't meet again."

Before I could finish speaking, I was pulled into my father's chest once more. His long arms wrapped around me, pushing my head against a strong shoulder.

"I've wanted to hear nothing more than that from you. From today onward, you will stay here as my dearest and most favored daughter. You will be the Lycan King's most honorable princess once more. That bastard wouldn't hold a candle to you, my dear Della."

Jackson raised an eyebrow at me, and after a few moments, he scoffed, "Alright, have a good rest, *Princess*. We'll hold a small banquet later tonight to celebrate your return. All the Alphas will be invited, and everyone will know that the Lycan Princess has returned. Oh, and don't worry, Father. I'll handle the arrangements."

"I can't wait," Father replied immediately. "This is the happiest day of my life, second only to the day you were born, Della. I will hold the biggest banquet we can possibly hold on such short notice. While you're at it, fetch one of the servants and tell them to bring a new set of clothes for Della. Her garb is much too cheap for a princess, especially when she will be the only one on the continent."

"Figured you'd say something like that. I already gave the order a while ago." Jackson snapped his fingers, and at once, six Omega maids rolled in three huge racks from outside. They bowed to Father and Jackson and promptly showed me all the different outfits.

"Do you remember that tailor you liked when you were a child? This is all his work. Choose whatever you want. And if you don't like anything here, I'll have them make another selection for you."

"No, I love it! Thank you, Jackson!" I ran over from the side of my bed, practically flying toward him like a lark. As I gave him a big hug, he picked me up with one arm wrapped around my waist and spun me around.

"Anyways, rest well. And don't worry about a thing, okay? As long as I'm around, you can get away with whatever you want around here."

Jackson put me back down and followed my father out of the room, but he stopped just past the door. He looked back at me as if something urgent had suddenly come to mind.

"What's wrong?" I asked.

He hesitated for a moment, but eventually replied, "Do you want to invite Alpha Kylian tonight?"

I was amused by how considerate he was, his expression wavering as he waited for my response. I knew that he was worried the very mention of Kylian would hurt me, but I was no longer the woman I once was.

Today, I returned to my rightful place with my family. I was no longer the omega who was afforded no other choice than to bite her tongue regardless of the injustice she faced. I was no longer afraid of losing someone whose heart I had never truly won.

I was a coward and a fool no longer. Those were traits I had learned belonged to Kylian, not me.

"Of course. Send him an invite too."