

Alpha's Hunt by Starlight Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Drunken Balls

I've lost my mind.

Not today, I lost it quite some time ago. You see, when you still have some logic or sense in you, you think of the consequences, the risks, and funnily enough, you give a s*** about them as well.

But when you've lost your mind, you don't give a s*** anymore.

I creep along the hallway, my eyes— now used to the dark— make out the door of Darcie's room.

Luckily, Luke didn't come back into the room today. Otherwise, I'd have to climb down my window and I'm not a fan of climbing.

I sniff myself again, making sure the perfume covers my scent, and nod in approval. My hand closes around the cool metal of the door handle. Slowly, cautiously, I turn it.

Click!

The room is enveloped in darkness. I see a figure on the queen-sized bed. Quietly, I make my way towards Darcie's walk-in closet, praying neither Darcie nor Flora wake up.

I start looking through the dresses in there, s***tered around as though a ravenous animal had looked through them.

Too vulgar. Too flashy. Too short. Too big.

Well, if I am planning on doing whatever it takes to find my mate, I should make a good first impression, shouldn't I?

But seems like fate has other plans since I can't find anything that would look good on me.

Damn! Why does this Lycan female only have clothes I'd never wear?!

In my frustration, I let out a silent scream and grab a dress, ball my hands in it and shake out all my anger.

When I'm done, breathing as soundlessly as possible, I drop it down only to see something under the pile of clothes, something that catches my eye.

I pull the dress out and hold back a gasp. The soft pink material flows in my hands as the puffy evening gown unfurls in front of me, pearly white beads are s***tered along the neckline and skirt.

Grinning like an idiot I tuck the dress under my arm and waltz out. Your sense of fashion isn't all that bad, Darcie, I'll give you that.

When I pa** by Darcie's bed, I see the side table laden with masks. I s***** the first one in my reach. I leave Darcie's room, feeling victorious and giddy.

Rushing to my room, I peek in to see if Luke's there. Seeing no one, I rush inside and into my room where finally I start jumping around squealing like an idiot.

I collapse on my bed, dress clutched to my chest, a dreamy smile on my face.

Tomorrow, my world is going to change.

"Achuuu!"

In my hurry, I had failed to notice that the mask I grabbed has two white feathers tucked on one side.

And I'm allergic to feathers.

"Goddess, after all, I'm doing," I mutter and fix my mask again "my mate should be the king to make it worth it."

Though I know I will love him with all my heart, no matter who he is, a girl can dream, right?

I cast another glance at the mirror. My hair is in an elegant chignon, the makeup light and well done and the dress makes me look taller than I am.

But the best thing is the shine in my eyes and the smile on my face— real happiness.

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I leave the room, a little frown tugs at my lips. Luke still isn't back. Where is he? Did something happen?

An unfamiliar weight on my heart makes my eyebrows furrow. I shake my head.

Don't think about him, think about your mate. Luke will be fine.

Everyone has already gone down, the omegas are in their rooms, away from the party downstairs. I take a deep breath and start towards the stairs.

I look down in the hall, my heart beats a hundred times per second, my mind races a million miles per breath. My eyes search the heads I can see but I don't feel anything.

A thread of fear coils around my heart.

Don't be so ridiculous! Go down and look for him, he'll be here!

Yeah... Yeah! All these Lycans and all these werewolves they've invited, my mate has to be somewhere am*** them!

I start descending the stairs, all eyes turn to me. My breath catches in my throat. I wait for someone to point me out and scream; Imposter! But no one does. They simply stare gazes ranging from curious to lusty.

My feet start moving.

Twenty steps. The tremble in my hands stops.

Fifteen. I hold my chin high.

Ten. My confidence upsurges.

Five. My lips curve up in a smile.

Three. I sneeze.

Perfect timing, humility. Just perfect.

I slip backward, catching a glimpse of the surprised looks of the crowd, my body braces itself for the impact, and then suddenly the wind gets knocked out of my lungs and my mind starts spinning again.

I feel something tightly coiled around my waist, my hands flat against something hard that feels like... A suit?

My eyes fly up to meet stormy blue ones, staring down at me with enough intensity to drown a battleship.

Luke is dressed in a dark blue suit, the same color as his eyes, a velvety black mask concealing his face.

He leans down, my eyes become the size of the moon, and my heart squirms in place, hyper-aware of his lips against my ear.

“What are you doing here?” A deep voice hisses in my ear

I pull back as much as his grip would let me and look up at the stormy blue eyes boring into my own. I give him my brightest smile.

“Finding my mate.”

Slipping out of his hold, I turn around as if nothing just happened and ignore every pair of eyes looking at me suspiciously.

I look around the hall, keep my senses sharp, eyes peeled but I don't see him I don't feel my heart swell with happiness, I don't find a scent that would drive me ecstatic.

Come on, mate! Where are you?

A man rushes past me and at the same time, I see a girl push through the crowd. They lock gazes and I can almost feel the air grow heavy. Mates.

I watch with a smile as the man folds the girl in his arms and kisses the top of her head, watch as the girl closes her eyes, smiling softly.

My smile turns rueful, a dull ache of longing grips my heart. I look around again, my heart starts sinking as the realization hits me like a brick in the face.

He's not here.

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Music starts playing, a slow soft tune. With a sigh, I move through the crowd, going back to the stairs. I don't want to stay here anymore.

A hand falls on my shoulder, hope cuts through me with painful intensity as I whirl around only to have my eyes locked with crystal blue ones.

This time, disappointment almost makes me cry out loud. Ethan looks back at me, not my mate.

“Elise,” his eyes instantly cloud with worry “are you upset?”

“Me? Upset?” I shrug off his hand, sarcasm drips from my voice “Of course not. This is what my neutral face looks like.”

He cringes “Not the best question, I suppose.”

“Brilliant observation,” I mutter

"If it would make your mood better," he gently takes my hand in his, gives me a little smile "Would you like to dance?"

Everything in me says no. Everything in me wants to get out of this dress and fall face-first on my bed and mumble myself to sleep.

But... I sneaked into the bloody Crescent Moon Ball! I wanted to find my mate, yes, but why should I let go of the chance to enjoy?

"Is there a reason I should say no?" I return his smile

Ethan grins at me and pulls me towards the center of the hall, which has been presently made into the dance floor. We

sway softly to the music and I have to admit, it's not all that bad.

Except for one thing of course.

"Sorry!" I say as I step on his foot yet again

"It's fine." Ethan says with a pained smile "But I think I'm going to have ugly feet after this."

I cringe, then give him an apologetic smile "I hope your mate can deal with that."

The moment those words escape out of my mouth, I feel like someone just punched me in the stomach. My pain is showing on my face.

"I guess you didn't find him," Ethan says softly, I sigh "I can relate. I didn't find my mate either."

I feel hopelessness course through me. My lips tremble. I clamp them together.

"What sort of a party is this?" I say, my voice normal despite my parched throat "is there anything to drink or what?"

"There is but—

"Perfect," I grab Ethan's arm and start dragging him along with myself, ignoring the fact that the music is still playing "take me there. Only chocolate and wine can soothe my broken heart."

"Elise, think for a moment," Ethan says, though he keeps walking "Many Lycans and werewolves don't find their mates, it's not the end of the world."

I turn sharply to face him "For an Alpha, maybe it's not. But for me, it might just be."

Ethan runs a hand through his blond hair. When he looks at me, I see a pang of hurt in his eyes.

“You think I don’t know what these people treat you like?” He says quietly, I avert my eyes “The looks your pack

gave you the first time you put your hand out to shake mine, the way the Beta’s daughter pushes you around, how Luke barely lets you talk to anyone else,”

Ethan puts his hands on my shoulders and takes a step forward.

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“You think I don’t notice?” He says, his eyes soft almost... Pitiful

My hands curl into fists, my jaw tightens. I level him with my steeliest glare as I step away.

“Don’t,” the burn of my voice surprises even me “Don’t pity me. I’m better off without it.”

Ethan’s eyes widen, he opens his mouth to say something but my feet already turn around and take me away.

I don’t want his bloody sympathy! Mate or no mate, I’m not some damsel who needs saving! I don’t need a stupid shoulder to cry on!

‘Yeah, because you want a whole man.’

I groan out loud and bump into someone. He turns around and raises an eyebrow.

“Holy mother of...” Carlos mutters a curse under his breath “How the hell— no wait, I’m not going to ask what happened. The look on your face tells me you only need one thing right now.”

“Food.” Carlos puts an arm around my shoulder, I look up at him, thanking my stars that at least I have my bestie here

“You’re the best,” I mumble, quickly rubbing my gla**y eyes dry

Carlos doesn’t ask me anything and I’m sure he figured it out. He lets me devour everything I can find until I stumble upon a bottle of champagne.

“Elise, that’s a bad idea,” He says “you’ve never been drunk before! It’s going to mess you up!”

“Everything worth it begins from bad ideas,” I say and pour myself a gla**

“I’m not letting you—

“Carlos!” Another pack warrior comes there “come along, the ceremony is starting!”

“But—

I wiggle my fingers at Carlos as the man drags him away, towards the stage. Finally, now no one can come between me and my drink!

The liquid leaves a burning trail as it goes down my throat but I relish it. I stare at the stage, where all the participant Alphas stand, the skylights open, the letting Crescent Moonlight inside.

I watch with curiosity as the moonlight focus’s on the first Alpha, he kneels, muttering something. The light swims from him towards the crowd and lands on a man.

Everyone claps, the two men shake hands. Partners.

I pour myself another gla**, ignoring the stupid ceremony. I drink until my mind feels numb and I can’t think of lifetime labor anymore. I drink until I can’t imagine about my damned mate anymore and drink until my guardian angels appear as mini Elises and warn me not to take off my mask and pick up a second bottle.

“Pitts,” I try to wave them away “I’m fine! Do you think happy juice was invented for chemistry? Bah! It was invented for champions to drink when they’re feeling down!”

“She’s hopeless,” my good angel says to the bad one

“Hopelessly smart,” I take a swing from the bottle “Who needs a bloody mate? I’m gonna escape this damned pack on my own!”

As if the goddess herself agrees with me, light shines on me and my angles share panicked looks.

“What?” I say as everyone looks at me, my pack members gasp, fishes drop out of their mouths

Someone wades through the crowd, towards me. I squint my eyes to see properly in the blinding light that’s surrounding me.

Luke stands in front of me, eyes wide and disbelieving.

“You,” his words echo in my head “You’re my partner.”