

Pregnant and Rejected by My Alpha Mate Chapter 7

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Chapter 7

#Chapter 7 Bastien is Drunk

10 Days Until the Rejection Ceremony

Selene's POV

The spinning blades of the ceiling fan whirl over my head, their swift revolutions mesmerize my senses, distracting me from all the unwelcome thoughts in my head.

Today is my three year anniversary, but instead of champagne and gifts, I lay alone in my bed while my husband is out doing Goddess knows what. I've been staring at the ceiling for the better part of an hour, and I don't plan on going anywhere anytime soon.

When I lost Luna, I thought I'd lost the ability to love. I imagined that nothing could ever come close to the pain of her death, that my heart was incapable of feeling any deep emotions without her.

I wasn't entirely wrong; I do feel things less intensely than I did before. But if I'd known there was an emotion so powerful that it could destroy me even when I can't feel it completely, I would never have married Bastien.

My husband is going to reject me in ten days, and I can't even be angry with him. Bastien sacrificed three years of his life for me; he put off his own dreams, his own happiness, to care for me. He doesn't owe me anything, and to ask him to stay married to me when he doesn't want to would be incredibly selfish.

It's Bastien's turn to start a new chapter, and as painful as it is to contemplate, I have to let him. I owe him that and so much more; it's not his fault he doesn't love me.

I'm still lying there when my phone rings.

Bastien's name flashes across the screen, and I pause a moment before answering. There's no reason to broadcast my desperation. "Hello?"

I do not hear my husband's voice on the other end of the line. Instead a woman's high, tinkling laugh filters through the receiver. "Oh Bastien you're too much!"

I don't recognize the voice, "Hello?" I try again, the call sounds very muffled. A pocket-dial perhaps?

"Bella, would you behave for once?" I know that voice – only too well.

"Only if you make me." I can practically hear her eyelashes batting through the phone. Some of the static fades, her voice suddenly sounding very clear. "Mmm," She moans, "You remember just how I like it."

I stab my finger into the 'end call' button, cutting off the exchange before the nausea rising in my throat can overwhelm me.

Arabella Winters has returned to Elysium, and Bastien is spending our anniversary with her instead of me. The she-wolf disappeared after my mating ceremony, traveling around to other packs in search of adventure or a new beginning. But whatever Arabella had been looking for, she clearly hadn't found. Perhaps because she already knew where it was, but it was simply out of reach.

Well, it won't be out of reach for much longer.

As disgusted as I am by the phone call, I know I don't really have a right to be angry with Bastien. Our marriage has always been one of convenience, and I don't want to get in the way of his happiness. I wish he would wait until we are officially separated, but he's given me everything. The least I can do is return the favor.

I don't want to be an anchor chaining Bastien to the past when he deserves to forge his own future, but that's exactly what I will become if I tell him about the baby.

He can't know, not ever.

After the rejection ceremony I'll take some time to get my affairs in order, and then I'll leave. I'll take a page out of Arabella's book and search for a new beginning with a new pack. In some ways it's freeing. The last time I started over I didn't get to choose my path. I love Bastien, but even the most successful arranged marriage will always be tainted by its forced beginning,

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Chapter 7 Bastien is Drunk

Besides, I have a lot to look forward to as well. After all, I will be taking a piece of Bastien with me. I will have my baby; someone who I can love unconditionally and who will love me in return.

I slide my palm to my belly, resting it over the most precious secret I've ever held. I imagine this is how my mother must have felt when my father died – the similarities

between our journeys do not escape me, but I'm determined not to continue on her path.

My mother was running for her life when she left the Calypso pack, she didn't have any resources or plans, she was in such dire straits she could not turn down an offer for help, no matter from whom it came. That will not be my story.

When I leave Elysium I will be taking everything I possess with me, everything I need to start fresh. I will not need to indebt myself to a man in order to survive, and I will not marry no matter how much judgment I incur for being a single mother.

About an hour later my phone rings again. This time it's Aiden and I answer immediately; Bastien's Beta only ever calls me if something is wrong.

"Aiden?"

Raucous voices and distorted music fill my ears, soon followed by the Beta's baritone. "Selene, I'm sorry to call you like this, but we have a bit of a situation: Bastien is plastered and apparently determined to give himself alcohol poisoning. We can't get him to stop, and I don't think he'll listen to anyone but you. At least, I hope he'll listen to you."

"Where are you?"

"Loup Garou," Aiden shouts over the deafening background noise.

"I'm on my way." I know the bar, though I've never been inside. I've gotten used to being around people in controlled settings, but big crowds still frighten me.

I do some breathing exercises as I drive, focusing on keeping myself calm rather than pondering the undoubtedly unpleasant scene awaiting me. Some anniversary this is. It's so late there's not any traffic, so the trip only takes a few minutes.

I step out of the car, eyeing the neon bar sign and imposing doorway with great trepidation. Taking one final soothing breath, enter the fray.

Three things jump immediately to my attention. First, Bastien is not the only one on a bender. The bar is in borderline chaos, so packed with wolves I think it must be a fire hazard. Second, Aiden is not Bastien's only drinking buddy. Arabella stands close by his side, her body language making the nature of their relationship very clear. And finally, my husband is dangerously out of control.

I can feel his agitation from across the room, can read the barely concealed fury simmering closer and closer to its boiling point. There's something else tangled up in his aura, something that seems strangely akin to despair.

I've seen Bastien like this before; if he drinks heavily enough his demons emerge to torment him. I've never known what happened in his past to inflict such agony, but it's always unbearable to watch.

I don't really want to move deeper into the malay. I would prefer to stay near an exit, I do not like the idea of not having a viable escape route.

I give myself a little shake and stride through the crowd, appreciating how naturally it parts for me. Though no one bothers pretending they are not watching the unfolding scene with avid interest, the bar patrons do me the courtesy of staying in place even after I pass, leaving a wide path to the door.

The commotion pulls Bastien's attention from Arabella. It takes him a second to process my appearance, but the vivid flash of emotion in his eyes broadcasts his surprise once he does. My presence seems to sober him slightly, some of the manic energy he'd been exuding ebbing away.

He pulls up to his full, imposing height and prowls forward, sweeping his gaze across the crowd as he closes the distance between us. If I didn't know any better I'd think he's scanning the room for threats, but that doesn't make any sense. We're on home turf among trusted pack members. No, he must be trying to figure out who snitched.

Bastien creates a sort of cage with his arms when he reaches me, wrapping his large body around me protectively. "What are you doing here?"

I don't know what to make of his apparent paranoia, but I have to admit I feel infinitely calmer than I did a second ago. I'm also deeply relieved to find he is not angry or put out by my arrival. "I came to take you home."

Chapter 7 Bastien is Drunk

Hard eyes bore into me for a long moment, "You could have called, I would have met you in the parking lot."

Ah. So perhaps he is irritated after all. Bastien isn't one for public scenes, and it occurs to me that he's probably especially opposed to creating one in front of Arabella. "You'll come, then?" I ask nervously.

Bastien responds instantly, "Of course."

By the time we get home Bastien is all but passed out. I circle around to the passenger seat and undo his seatbelt, shaking him gently. "Bastien. Wake up, we're home."

He rouses at the sound of my voice, blinking at me dazedly.

"Come on, big bad wolf." I tease, "Let's get you to bed."

Flames ignite in his eyes. "Is that an invitation?"

A stab of pain pierces my heart. The man has no idea what I would give for one last night with him. Unfortunately I don't think he's in any state to make good on the offer. "I meant your bed." I finally answer, "But I'll tell you what: If you can get yourself up and into the house, I'll invite you to do whatever you want with me, wherever you want."

Before I realize what's happening I'm upside down, with Bastien's shoulder digging into my stomach. He carts me into the house like a sack of potatoes, navigating to his bedroom and tossing me onto the bed. I yelp with surprise, then shiver with anticipation as a very large, very aroused wolf bears down on me.

Selene's POV

I stare up at Bastien with wide eyes, my heart racing in my chest, so loud I'm sure he can hear it.

Flames dance up my cheeks, and I know I must be bright red. Lust, excitement and fear war for control of my body, swirling around each other in an intoxicating tempest

Bastien lowers himself to the bed, leaning over my prone form and pinning my hands against the mattress on either side of my head. He swallows my startled gasp, his mouth claiming mine before another word can be spoken.

As tense as I was moments before, I immediately let go when Bastien takes control going soft and supple as he extracts kiss after kiss from my lips. I open myself to him, giving my body up for his conquest and letting him sweep me away from reality. I lose all sense of my surroundings, the ecstasy of Bastien's kiss barring all sound, all thought, all sensation not of him.

Bastien has kissed me thousands of times and made love to me in every way possible, but I've never felt such desperation to make us one. I am painfully aware that this kiss will be our last, that we are running on stolen time.

I want to drag this out as long as possible. I know the moment we stop, it will all be over for good. I want to brand his lips into my skin, I want to scorch the image of him, powerful and fierce above me, into my memory, I want to make it so I can never forget how perfect this moment feels

His teeth and tongue assail me, melding pain and pleasure until I'm gasping and moaning in his arms. I arch my back, straining toward his body in a feverish attempt to find relief for my sensitive flesh.

I know he'll give me the relief I need eventually, but it won't be soon enough. Bastien knows my body better than his own, and he revels in taking me to the very limits of

pleasure. He works me over until my body is no longer my own, until my very existence has been reduced to a throbbing, searing ache that only he can ease.

When he doesn't relent, I slump back down with a frustrated whine, and Bastien all but purrs with satisfaction. "Greedy little wolf." He chuckles, dragging my lips from mine. He lays a trail of kisses over my jaw and down the slender column of my throat,

eventually moving up to the soft spot behind my ear where he continues his torment.

The next thing I know he's laving the tender flesh where my neck meets my shoulder, tasting me. I can't take it anymore. Please, Bastien, I want to touch you." I squirm, trying to break his hold on my wrists.

He takes my mouth again, delving his tongue between my lips to tangle deliriously with my own. Bastien finally settles between my legs, fusing every inch of his body to mine. I writhe beneath him with delicious friction and he loosens his commanding grip, freeing my wrists. I bury my hands in his hair, nipping at his lower lip with my teeth.

He growls throatily, pulling back only far enough to meet my eyes. Flames engulf Bastien's intense gaze, and I'm at a loss to determine whether he is sad or angry. "We were fated." He declares, "We were mates but we never got to be together, not really."

I freeze.

It suddenly feels as if all the air has been let out of the room. I push at Bastien's shoulders until he rolls off me. There it is, the truth I've always known but he's never spoken. Arabella is Bastien's mate, and I took him from her. He sacrificed his destiny to do what he considered right, to help me when I was too lost and damaged to help myself.

Guilt corrodes my insides like acid. I hate that I've cost him so much, that I'm responsible for that tortured expression on his face. I sit up slowly and glance at Bastien over my shoulder. He's laying on his back, looking at me with such pain and regret I feel sure he didn't mean to reveal that secret. Or perhaps he regrets caving to drunken lust when he's finally free to be with his mate.

"I'm sorry." My voice is thick with emotion, and I get to my feet before he can notice and catch me. By the time I get to the door Bastien is half-asleep. I can't recall ever seeing him so drunk.

I did that, I drove him to that low. Self-loathing carries me to bed, I sink into its arms as I give myself over to sleep, dreading the dreams bound to await me.

9 Days Until the Rejection Ceremony

Chapter BLUSE

I wake in the morning with a pounding head and sour stomach, despite the fact that Bastien is supposed to be the one with the hangover. I barely make it to the toilet when I remember the baby, Welcome to morning sickness. I think grimly.

I curl up against the wall, waiting for the intermittent bouts of nausea to pass.

My mind wanders, but not very far. I keep replaying Bastien's words from last night in my head. I hadn't realized how guilty he felt about ending our marriage until he looked at me so forlornly and admitted that Arabella is his true mate. I knew I'd been keeping them apart, but Bastien is so stoic I never realized how much pain it truly caused him.

Hearing the words felt like a punch in the gut, but they also helped strengthen my resolve. I look down at my belly and give it a little pat, "We're doing the right thing,"

My phone chirps from the other room, and I manage to drag myself back into the bedroom to check it. Thinking about Arabella appears to have summoned her,

A bright blue text message lights up the screen. Selene, this is Arabella. Do you think it might be possible for us to meet?

I have absolutely no desire to meet my husband's mate, but I feel lowe her this much. Sure, when and where?

Full Moon Cafe – noon?

I'll see you then

Arabella Winters is everything I am not: Tall, blonde and voluptuous, with an innate confidence that allows her to flourish in pack society

I sit across from her at a small table, a pair of cappuccinos sitting untouched between us. Big brown doe-eyes look me up and down, her face never revealing her thoughts. When she finally speaks, her voice is high and reedy. "Listen, I know things are really complicated with you and Bastien right now, and I just felt..." She pauses to search for the right words, "I saw how upset you looked last night and I just want to assure you that nothing happened between Bastien and me."

She gives every impression of genuine kindness, but an odd prickling sensation on the back of my neck warns me to withhold judgment, "Oh?"

"You have my word." Arabella vows, "Nothing happened and nothing will until your separation is official."

I can't keep the surprise from my face.

Arabella winces, "I'm sorry I thought the information was public."

I bring my coffee to my lips, intending to buy time with a few sips. I barely taste it before I remember that pregnant women aren't supposed to have caffeine. I set the mug back down. "It isn't, not yet."

"I'm sorry." She says again. "I didn't means I'm just so excited. We've been waiting to be together for so long I can hardly believe it's finally going to happen."

Guilt twists in my belly, "Arabella, I am sorry I came between you."

Her perfectly plucked brows furrow. "Don't take that on, Selene. None of this was your fault. I can't say I care for the way Gabriel handled things, but that's on him, not you."

The strange prickling spreads, starting to wind down my spine. "What do you mean, the way Gabriel handled it?"

"Well the threats of course." Arabella says offhandedly.

"What threats?"

Her eyes go almost comically wide and she waves me off. "I think I've put my foot in my mouth again. Truly it's nothing."

"No." I counter firmly. "I want to know."

"I really shouldn't." She demurs,

"Please, Arabella."

She frowns, "Well, you know we were planning to get engaged before you escaped?"