

The Silver Hope

Chapter 3 Mate

The voice in my head yelled "Mate!" Wait. What? I don't understand. What 'mate' are you talking about?

"This man is your mate!" The voice inside my head yelled it this time like what is so hard to understand.

The tall handsome man doing business with my father smiles at me and politely introduces himself, "Hi! I am Alexander Ulrich. And you are?" He extends his hand towards me for a handshake.

I look at him and his huge hand absentmindedly trying to figure out what the voice in my head meant by "mate" when my father interrupts my thoughts and gently says, "Sweetie, Alex is waiting for you to say something."

"Oh gosh, I'm so sorry. Where are my manners? Nice to meet you Alexander. I'm Hope. Hope Alarie", I clasped his hand and a jolt of electricity courses through my arm and throughout my body causing my legs to buckle from beneath me and I stumble.

Alexander rushes towards me and breaks my fall, catching me in time. I felt the electricity between us as he held me in his arms while I stared into his blue black eyes like the color of the sky where space meets earth. He felt so good. I was breathing heavily, trying to catch my breath. Oh my gosh, he smells like freshly cut grass and wood shavings. It was a heady combination. "Are you ok, Hope? Are you hurt?" He looks at me with sincere concern etched on his handsome face. I look at his lips and I imagine kissing them. Dear Lord, what am I thinking?! 2

"I'm sorry. I don't know what has come over me. I'm usually not this clumsy." I try to explain, aware I was touching his arms, his skin smooth to the touch.

My Dad starts laughing. "Woah! I'm guessing Alex here is your first crush." He teases and laughs even louder after saying it.

Thanks Dad! Now, I feel embarrassed. I was blushing through the roots of my hair and I wanted the floor to open up and swallow me whole. CRUSH? Come to think of it, my Dad was right. I have never had a crush. I thought I did once, but I was always put off with his smell- like dirty socks and wet dog. I wrinkled my nose just thinking of it.

Alexander seeing my nose wrinkle in disgust laughs and asks, "Do I stink or maybe your Dad is mistaken and you don't like me at all?"

I pull away from him, stood up with as much dignity as I had left and

apologized, "Sorry, no, it's not you. I was thinking of a boy in school who smelled like dirty socks."

My Dad and Alexander both laughed heartily at what I said, when my Mom walked into the house with bags of groceries in her arms. "Hope, honey, can you help me with these please." Alexander rushes over to her and grabs the bags of groceries. "Here, let me help you. I'm Alex by the way." he said. "Oh sorry. I didn't know we had company. Thank you dear for helping me." My mom had this huge smile on her face. I knew what was going through her mind. What a hunk! He definitely was a hunk. I sighed dreamily.

He was tall. I'm guessing 6'4" and muscular. His chest went on forever. He looked like he was in his mid or late 20's. He had a commanding presence but was such a gentleman. I watched under hooded eyes as his biceps moved under his skin. His chest muscles bulging under his gray shirt. I wonder how it would feel to rest my head on his chest and listen to his heart. Maybe kiss it. I felt myself blush again. "Hope, you gotta keep it together!", I thought. "But he's so HOT!", the voice answered back. "Stop reminding me," I groaned.

"By the way, there are 2 other cars parked outside. I don't know if they're with you," looking at Alexander, "Or they're customers."

"They're with me, Mrs. Alarie." Alexander said. "I know this sounds so straightforward of me, but may I ask you out for dinner?" He looked at me. "All of you out for dinner perhaps?"

My mom answered, "Sure OR we can cook here? Either way, I'm good. We can have a pre-celebration of Hope's 18th birthday. Which is tomorrow." Alexander looked at me puzzled, "You're turning 18 tomorrow?"

I smiled, "Technically, yes. Tomorrow is my 18th birthday.

I saw the confusion in his eyes for a split second. "Happy Birthday then, Hope. I'll take everyone out for a pre celebration birthday party for my-ah Hope. How about that? Only the best for Hope. At Lemuria. It will be an honor and a privilege to spend this special day with you." His intense gaze was on me and it felt as if we were the only two people on the planet. I had only met the man several minutes ago, but it seemed like I had known him my whole life. I shook my head. Silly me. It's not possible.

My mother gasped, "It's expensive there." Alexander smiled, "Don't worry about the expense, Mrs. Alarie. Everything on me." He looks at his watch. "I'll see you all there at 7:30PM." He shakes my Dad's hands, pats my Mom's arms and turns to give me a hug. He lingered a little, then with a sigh, he let me go. He gave me one last smile and then he was gone. I stood there rooted at the spot, staring at the door, hoping he'd forgotten

something and come back.

“Well, Hope dear, scoot.” My mother gives me a push to go upstairs to my room. “You have an hour to get ready.”

I look at the clock on our wall and give a little screech of panic. I need to get ready. I run upstairs to take a shower and change. I want to be pretty when I meet him again.