



# Mated to Fenrir (Fated Mates Collection #5)

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**Category:** Fantasy

**Description:** Delia has given up on ever finding her fated mate

As a wolf shifter, love isn't enough for Delia, she has to find the one, the fated mate that will make her feel whole. The problem is that her wolf has led her astray more than she likes to admit, making it hard to trust her.

Fenrir isn't looking for his fated mate when he runs into her at a Jinx Masquerade party. But one interaction with Delia and he knows he's found her, the wolf that complements him in all of the best ways.

Now all he has to do is convince her that they're the real deal. And that her fated mate is also a god.

Mated To Fenrir is a Norse mythology-inspired paranormal m/f romance and part of the Jinx Paranormal Dating Agency world. It features a lonely wolf shifter looking for love, a cinnamon roll shifting god, dating agency hijinks, and a pinch of steam.

**Total Pages (Source):** 15

# Page 1

*Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 4:27 pm*

DELIA

I knocked on the front door of my best friend's new flat. Though it wasn't that new, Anise had moved in with her boyfriend about a year ago, but I'd known her living in her old place for so long that this one still felt like it was new.

She pulled open the front door and smiled at me. "Hey, Delia."

"Hey," I responded as I gave her a hug.

"Come in. The others will be here in a bit. Adelaide was supposed to be picking Chelsea up before they came here, but there was something about an escaped kangaroo. I'm not really sure."

I chuckled. "One of the dangers of working at an animal sanctuary, there's never a zero percent chance of an animal escape."

"Knowing Adelaide, it could also be that she and Horus lost track of time." Anise waved me inside, and I followed her.

"It wouldn't be the first time," I joked. Adelaide had told us of plenty of times when she and her boss had gotten a little carried away while working. They'd never put any of the animals they worked with in danger, but they did struggle to keep their hands off each other at times.

I followed Anise inside her flat, looking around and easily seeing where my friend had made her mark on the space. "Where's Kuk?"

"Out for a drink with Baal," she responded. "Which is why we've got a girls' night with no gods." She picked up a bottle of wine and held it out as a question.

I nodded. If I was going to be around my friends and all of their loved-up-ness, then I was going to need a sip or two.

"Not that I really need to send him out to get that," Anise said. "I can just tell him that I want some time with my friends and he'll go do something else. Sometimes he goes to see his sister."

"And he doesn't mind?"

She shrugged and pushed a glass of wine towards me. "What's an evening when you're immortal?"

"You're not immortal," I pointed out.

"True. But I think Kuk's hoping that I'll choose to take that path in the future."

"Will you?"

"I don't know. I mean, it's a big deal, living forever. I didn't give it much thought until I started dating Kuk. But I have to consider it, right? How could I leave someone who makes me feel like he does?"

I shrugged. "Good question."

She sat down opposite with a glass of wine of her own and let out a contented sigh. "I think I'd become immortal for him," she said. "I suppose it's a different question when there are others around who are going through the same thing."

"Have Chelsea and Adelaide talked about whether they'd take immortality?" Both of them were also dating gods, making me the only one of our group who was single and not with a deity.

"Neither of them has mentioned it. But you know how loved up they are."

"Mmm." I took a sip of my wine, trying not to feel the stab of envy over my friends' happiness. I didn't want to take it away from any of them, I just wished I'd been able to find some of it myself.

"Sorry, I know you just broke up with Todd..."

"That was six months ago," I responded. "I'm fine." It was a lie, and I could sense the protest from my inner wolf in response to it, even if she was over him and already looking for the next prospect to be my fated mate.

Anise raised an eyebrow while tapping her finger against her glass.

I sighed and swirled my glass of wine. "I think I'm going to stop looking for my mate."

Anise raised an eyebrow. "Really?" Her disbelief came through her voice. "Even after all the dating events you dragged us to?"

"You mean the ones you bailed on?" I half-joked. I didn't really mind that she'd gone to meet Kuk during one of them, especially when she was happy with him.

"I didn't bail on all of them," she protested.

I sighed. "It's not that I don't want to find my fated mate, of course I do, but it's just more complicated than that, and I'm not sure if I can keep going through all of the

pain that comes with getting it wrong."

"Todd?" she guessed.

I nodded. "My wolf was convinced he was my mate." I touched my hand to my chest, feeling her stir within me at my thoughts. "She reacted so strongly to him when we met, and I thought that maybe he was it. But you know what happened there."

"Could she have been wrong?"

I sighed. "It's more complicated than that." I took a sip of my wine and tried to find the words to explain how fated mates worked for wolves.

Anise didn't prompt me, presumably realising that I was working through my thoughts in order to tell them to her.

"Fated mates isn't really a one-and-done thing. So, you could be my fated mate right now, and my wolf would be reacting to you. If you were a wolf shifter, anyway."

"Go on?" She took a sip of her wine, looking rather intently at me.

"Then we could meet again in ten years' time, and you'd no longer be my fated mate. Fate is about more than just the right person. It's about the timing too. What I need in a fated mate now, isn't what I'll need in a fated mate in ten years, or twenty."

"Doesn't that just mean you'll fall out of love with the person you're with?"

"Are you planning on falling out of love with Kuk?" I asked.

"I don't want to, no."

"Then it's exactly the same. The idea is that my mate and I would work on our relationship, and in doing so, we would stay one another's fated mate.

It's about fitting well together now and in the future.

So Todd was my fated mate when we met, which meant that he had the potential to be perfect for me, and that was why we fit so well together for the first few months.

It was only after that that things started falling apart.

It's not totally his fault, I didn't work on our relationship as much as I should have done either, and it makes it hard to have the wolves inside us insisting that something is the thing, and then it not being as simple as that. "

"It's not as simple as that for anyone else either," Anise reminded me.

"I know." I sighed and ran my hand through my hair, getting tangled in the thick waves before giving up. There really was no taming it sometimes. "Not a lot of the early mate bonds last for wolves. Everyone is too young, and they think that's all it takes, so don't put in the work they need to."

"And now that means you're not looking?"

"Yep. No more dating apps, no more parties, mixers, or anything like that. I'm going to be focusing on other things, and if my fated mate makes themselves known, then I might pursue something, but I'm not going to actively try and make it happen."

"So now isn't a good time to mention that Adelaide got us tickets to the Jinx Masquerade next weekend?"

I raised an eyebrow. "How did she manage that?"

"I think Horus is the one who got them," Anise admitted. "I'm sure Adelaide will tell us more when she gets here."

"Well, I suppose a masquerade isn't the same as trying to date," I mused.

"Excellent. Then you'll be needing a mask."

"Where are they even hosting something like that?"

"Their hotel. They have a grand ballroom or something like that."

"Ah. Then I guess we should get some dresses." Even if I wasn't looking for my mate, looking fabulous in a ballgown at an exclusive party wasn't something I was going to say no to.

"I thought you might be harder to convince."

I shrugged. "I've sworn off finding my fated mate, not off fun," I responded.

Anise smiled at me in a way that made me glad I'd said yes. Spending time with my friends would be worth it, even if it did mean heading to another event hosted by the Jinx Dating Agency.

## Page 2

*Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 4:27 pm*

DELIA

Even though I was with my friends and I was only coming to a Jinx event to have a good time, there was a part of me that was nervous about it. I might have decided I was going to take a break from trying to find my mate, but that didn't mean that other people in the room would understand that.

Or that the wolf within me would play along. Considering all the trouble she'd gotten me into over the years, it was fairly safe to assume that she wouldn't listen at all.

Adelaide and Chelsea chattered away as they approached the entrance to the hotel ballroom, while I trailed behind with Anise.

"Are you sure you're okay not entering with Kuk?" I asked her.

"Of course. I'm going to spend some time with you, and then I'm going to try to find him."

"Seems like a risky game when everyone is wearing a mask," I murmured.

"That's part of the fun." She grinned in a way that made me think that she was telling the truth.

"I'll take your word on it," I responded.

The bouncer at the door talked to Adelaide, and the barrier was lifted for us.



I had to admit that there was a part of me that thought we'd be turned away.

Jinx's clientele was mostly powerful gods and paranormals who were someone .

And while I thought my friends were pretty great, there was no doubt that the four of us could be considered somewhat ordinary in comparison to the rest of the guest list. The only thing that made us interesting was the fact that the other three were dating gods.

Music filled the room, upbeat and modern, while maintaining a classiness I'd come to associate with the Jinx Dating Agency. It wasn't precisely what I thought of when I considered what a masquerade would be, but this was nice.

Everywhere I looked, people were dressed in their best, with masks hiding their faces. Some of them were simple, and some were more extravagant. I touched my own mask, making sure that it was in place. It wasn't as fancy as some of the others I could see around me, but I didn't think that mattered.

I checked around me, only to find that my friends had managed to get further ahead than I'd expected them to, and were almost at the bar already. I hurried after them, not paying enough attention as I did and walking straight into someone.

He reached out to steady me, his hand touching the bare skin of my arm. The world around me faded, and I was only able to think of the feel of the hand on my arm, and the scent that reached my nose. I wasn't entirely sure if it was his aftershave, or if it was something more than that.

My wolf stirred within me, her interest piqued by something she was sensing.

I froze on the spot, unable to look away from troubled blue eyes that felt like they were staring into my soul from behind a dark grey mask.

The man's expression barely changed as he looked at me, save for a brief flicker of surprise. I wasn't sure how I knew that was what it was, but there was something deep within me that was sure of it.

"Excuse me," he said in a slightly accented voice, though he didn't say enough for me to recognise where it might be from.

He was already walking away when I realised that I was still staring at him, and I didn't exactly know why.

My wolf whispered the word mate within me. I closed my eyes and groaned. No doubt she was going to be unsufferable until I managed to get the man out of my mind. Which was going to be easier said than done when I could feel the urge coming from her to follow him, but I resisted.

Finding my mate wasn't as simple as that. It would take more than just running into someone to be sure that I'd found the person who was supposed to match me. Someone might be my mate, but that didn't mean that I had to accept them. I could say no.

I shook my head and counted to ten, hoping that it would give me a chance to collect my thoughts and ignore the wolf within me. Hopefully, I wouldn't run into him again, which would mean that it wasn't a problem.

Anise appeared in front of me, a worried expression on what I could see of her face. "You okay?"

I nodded. "Just got distracted," I murmured, though she probably couldn't hear me over the music.

"Okay. Well, Chelsea got us a bottle of champagne, so you should come and join us,"

she said, gesturing to a section of the ball that seemed to have tables.

I followed her over, almost feeling like I was in some kind of trance.

No doubt it was my stupid wolf. She was all in a tizzy thanks to the man we'd run into, and there was no convincing her that she needed to relax.

Hopefully, a couple of drinks would do that for her.

It hadn't worked before, but there was always a chance that it could work for the first time ever.

A wolf shifter could dream.

"Delia!" Chelsea called as I reached them. "I wondered where you got to."

"I got a bit turned around," I said as I took a glass of champagne from Adelaide.

I smiled at the other blonde. I didn't know her as well as I knew Anise and Chelsea, mostly because she only moved here for her job at the Horus Sanctuary, and she still spent most of her time there.

It was even mostly to do with the animals and not the fact she was dating Horus.

Though I was sure the Egyptian god had something to do with the amount of time she spent at work.

"It's all the masks," Anise said. "They make it hard to tell who is who."

"Starting to rethink your game with Kuk?" I teased.

She laughed. "Not at all."

I smiled and drank some of my champagne, feeling the bubbles bound around in my stomach. As expected, it did very little to quell the feelings coming from my wolf, and I found myself searching the crowd around us for the mysterious man who had made her respond like that.

I wasn't even sure what I was going to do if I found him. My wolf certainly had a few ideas, but I wanted to make sure I steered clear. After the disaster that had been my relationship with Todd, it was better if I didn't have to deal with another potential mate bond.

I was going to stay single.

I was another two glasses of champagne in when Chelsea dragged me onto the dance floor. She threw her hands up, making me smile and realise that the best way to forget my current train of thought was to give in to the music and dance.

The beat flowed through me along with the happy fuzziness that came from the champagne. I knew I was at my drinking limit, but that didn't stop the feeling of freedom that came with having it in my blood.

The song changed, and my wolf became alert. Or more alert than she already had been. I turned to find myself looking into the same dark blue eyes as earlier.

Without meaning to, I stepped closer. It was hard to think straight when my inner wolf wanted to be the one in control. She seemed to be convinced that the man opposite me was someone important.

That he was my mate.

And a part of me believed her, but there was also doubt in my mind. I'd spent so long actively searching for my mate and now he'd just shown up without any prompting? It made no sense.

Neither of us said anything as he closed the gap between us, making it clear that we were dancing together. He placed a hand on my hip, sending a thrill through me that had nothing to do with anything I'd been drinking.

Within me, my wolf was doing some kind of happy dance, no doubt feeling like she was winning in her determination to find my fated mate.

Perhaps she was right. Maybe it wouldn't be the worst thing to see where this kind of connection could go. After all, fate knew what it was doing most of the time.

I carried on dancing with him despite my reservations, enjoying the way his hand felt on my hip.

"Who are you?" he asked, his low voice rumbling through me in the most delightful way, even over the music.

"Nobody," I responded, already a little breathless. It was partly the dancing, partly the fight against what my wolf was howling at me, and partly because his presence seemed to have an effect on me that no one else ever had.

"Nobody wouldn't make my wolf respond like this," he murmured.

My heart pounded in response, and I tried not to let myself get lost in what he was saying. It meant nothing. This was just the kind of thing countless people had said to me when they heard that wolf shifters had fated mates and they wanted something from me.

He leaned closer, making the scent of him impossible to ignore. But I had to.

I needed to if I was going to avoid getting my heart broken all over again.

But then his lips were hovering over mine, and the urge to reciprocate was too much to ignore.

His breath fanned against my skin, only adding to the anticipation of the kiss to come.

There was something intoxicating about this moment.

It came with a thrill and desire to discover whether a connection with someone could prove to be something, or if it was just a passing attraction and nothing more than that.

He pulled me closer, and despite my reservations, I allowed it, causing my wolf to respond with glee. She liked this. She wanted this. It was just a matter of deciding if I did.

His lips brushed against mine, the connection almost immediate. My mind went black, and I wrapped my arms around his neck, deepening the kiss and giving in to the temptation that was right in front of me.

I was barely able to think straight as his hand landed on my lower back, pulling me even closer. Something stirred within me, a sense of belonging that I wasn't even entirely sure I'd felt before.

If he asked me to give him my entire world, then I would hand it over in this instant.

The thought was like pouring a bucket of ice-cold water over me, and I broke the kiss, pushing him away.

"I have to go," I murmured, ignoring the protest of my wolf in my chest. She didn't get a say in this. She'd gotten me hurt far too many times before, and I wasn't about to let it happen again.

Which meant leaving the club and going home to take a cold shower.

## Page 3

*Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 4:27 pm*

FENRIR

I watched the blonde woman run away from me, a little shocked at the turn of events.

I stepped forward to follow her, only for members of the crowd to get in the way.

I murmured my apologies to people as I stepped past them, though I doubted many of them were heard over the music and the shouts of people talking to one another.

My wolf howled away inside me, urging me on to go and find the woman he'd recognised as my mate. It had been a long time since I'd felt the reaction to anyone, and I didn't want to let her go without at least having a conversation where I could learn her name.

I finally managed to get to the edge of the dance floor, only to find that there were more people milling around, and none of them were the blonde whose kiss I could still feel on my lips.

A surge of disappointment came from my wolf, and it seemed like he curled up, accepting that he wasn't going to find her again today.

I let out a frustrated sigh. As quiet as he was now, I knew that there was going to be no stopping thinking about the woman until I'd seen her again, and found out more about what we could have.

With nothing else for it, I headed to the bar in the VIP section, which was thankfully a little quieter than the rest of the masquerade.



I ordered myself an akavit and sat there, swirling it around the glass but not drinking.

Someone sat down beside me and I looked up to find my sister joining me. Hel flipped her distinctive light-blue hair over her shoulder in a nonchalant way that I knew had taken her years to perfect. "You're acting strange, brother." She flagged down the bartender to get herself a drink.

"What do you know of strange?" I responded.

"I would argue a lot." She gestured to her half-mask, which was patterned after a skull, much the same way she could do to her own face if she used her necromancy.

The bartender set a drink down in front of her, and she smiled her thanks. I took a sip of my own drink, enjoying the distinct taste of caraway and dill seeds mixed with the spirit, and not really knowing what to do with myself otherwise.

"I didn't realise you were coming tonight," she said as she drank some of her bright pink cocktail through a straw.

"I wasn't going to," I admitted. "But Father got me a ticket."

"Mmm, I wonder what Father is planning for this evening," she mused.

"Best not to think about it too much," I responded.

"True. And Loki isn't really our problem," she pointed out. "So, what's bothering you?"

"How do you know that something is up?"

She shrugged. "I've known you for a long time."

I sighed. "My wolf responded to someone."

"Ah." Hel put down her cocktail glass. "I thought finding your fated mate was a good thing? You spent all that time writing poetry about how your mate would be like the moon back in the sixteenth century."

I groaned. "I thought you'd forgotten about that."

"I'm your sister, it's my job never to forget about that. Just like it's my job to remember the time you made a fool of yourself following that longboat captain around."

"My wolf liked him," I murmured.

"Like your wolf likes this person?" she asked curiously.

I nodded.

"All right, so why aren't you with them? Isn't your wolf responding some kind of sign that they're your fated mate?"

"Yes."

"So..."

I sighed and downed the rest of my drink, barely tasting it. "She ran away after we kissed."

"Never a good sign," Hel said.

I glared at her. "Unhelpful."

She shrugged. "But true. Did you ask her for her number? Maybe you can message her and suggest meeting up somewhere that isn't as intense as a Jinx Masquerade."

I grimaced. "I don't know her number."

"Okay, well, that's more of a problem. What do you know about her?"

"She's blonde, and her dress is silver."

"I thought you said you kissed her?"

"I did." I touched my hand to my head. "It's my wolf."

"Your wolf is why you kind of acted like an ass?" she asked.

"What? No. Yes. Kind of. It's hard to explain."

"I am so glad Loki had me with my mother and not yours," she muttered.

I snorted. "Necromancy doesn't sound that great."

"Neither does losing all rational thought because your wolf thinks someone smells nice, or whatever it is that sets him off."

"It's hard to explain." Especially when she didn't have an inner wolf trying to make decisions for her.

"Okay, so what you're saying is that your wolf responded to a woman you met here, and that she's blonde, and you kissed her?"

"Yes."

"And she didn't tell you her name?"

"Yes." I gestured to the bartender for another drink.

"Did you tell her your name?"

"No. I don't usually tell people I'm Fenrir the moment we meet."

"Maybe you should start. Especially if your wolf is going to remove rational thought from your head. I thought your dick would do that for you."

"Please don't talk about my dick," I murmured.

"Fine. Well, the good news is that there are only a few hundred people here, and you can rule out at least two of them for being related to you. Maybe three, I imagine Uncle Thor is here too."

My drink appeared in front of me and I resisted the urge to down it all at once again.  
"Good start."

"It's not as bad as you think," she said. "You can also rule out anyone that you've met before, and considering the number of gods who are currently in attendance, that's a good amount of people."

I shook my head. "That's not how fated mates work. It could be someone I've met before. If they weren't right for me then, but are right for me now, then my wolf would react differently."

"Wolf shifters," Hel muttered under her breath.

"Believe me, I feel the same," I responded.

"You'll still be able to rule out people you know if you talk to them tonight," she said.  
"So go forth and mingle."

"And if I can't find her again?"

Hel shrugged. "Then trust in fate."

"I don't know whether you're trying to help or not."

"I am. But isn't that the thing about fate? If it's something that's meant to happen, then everything will line up to make it happen."

"Hmm." I could see her point, but I couldn't help but think that it was more complicated than that. There were so many different parts that needed to come together for fated mates to work and have a relationship together.

Maybe this was one of those times where nothing would come of my wolf's reaction. It wasn't like it would even be the first time. Sometimes, even fate wasn't enough.

But I wasn't ready to give up. Not with the taste of her lips still on mine, mixing with the akavit, but somehow being even more heady and distracting than the spirit.

## Page 4

*Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 4:27 pm*

DELIA

The car pulled up in front of the Horus Sanctuary, and I got out along with my friends and their dates. I was a little worried to be heading into an event like this without one of my own, especially because there were likely to be a lot of people who had been at the Jinx Masquerade here.

And that could include the man my wolf thought was my mate.

I pushed the thought aside. Adelaide had asked us all to come to the fundraiser being held at Horus' animal sanctuary, and there was no way I was going to let her down, especially when I couldn't properly explain why I was so reluctant to come.

Besides, he probably wouldn't be here. The chances were high that he'd just been someone's plus one, and that I'd never see him again. That was probably the best outcome for us both.

I straightened out my dress and waited for Chelsea and Baal to come join me. "I hope you're not going to tell me that you have a gallery opening or something," I said to them. "I don't have a third dress."

Chelsea laughed and put her hand on Baal's chest. "A gallery would stop us from travelling for photoshoots."

I nodded, admittedly relieved that I wasn't going to have to dress up again .

I did enjoy it, but considering I was brushing elbows with deities and rich

paranormals, I didn't want anyone to actually realise that I only had two dresses when everyone else seemed to have a new outfit for every occasion.

We made our way inside, and I had to admit that the space was more impressive than I expected it to be.

I hadn't been able to make it last time the animal sanctuary had a fundraiser, not that I would have been missed, I was sure the ticket going to someone who could actually afford to donate was preferable.

All around the room, boards about the animals helped by the sanctuary were placed tastefully, while servers went around the room with trays of champagne. I took a glass and drifted over to the board with photos of wolves on them.

My heart ached as I read about how they'd been rescued from a private collection, even if I knew that was what the Horus Sanctuary did, and that it was why Horus rarely let anyone see the animals in person.

I didn't blame him for that, even if it was a little disappointing that I'd never actually seen the wolves that Adelaide often talked about.

Even in the photos, there was something majestic about them, and I felt a kinship with them that couldn't be explained other than by the inner wolf. She was responsible for a lot more of my thoughts than I truly wanted to admit.

My wolf stirred within me as if she'd been summoned, which wasn't a huge surprise, she could probably sense that they were her kind. Except that it almost felt as if she was pulling me in another direction.

I pushed her down, knowing that she was probably just trying to get me into trouble again. Knowing her, she was probably going to locate another mate and make things

even more confusing.

People mingled around me, and not for the first time, I found myself wondering which of the people in the room were gods, and who they were. Which admittedly wasn't something I'd spent a huge amount of time doing before my friends started dating gods, but this was what my life had become.

I sipped on my champagne, taking it slowly. This wasn't the kind of event where people would end up drunkenly dancing. It was the kind of place where people took their time, mingled, and talked about how much good the sanctuary did.

Which would be a lot easier if I knew anyone other than my friends.

Someone cleared their throat and I turned around, freezing in my place as I came face-to-face with a man I both recognised and didn't. My wolf woke up immediately, wanting me to pay attention to him, and to give in to her desire to be closer.

My lips parted, and my mouth ran dry as I looked at him. His dark hair was a little unruly, and his blue eyes were filled with a certain amount of mischief. I had no idea who this man was, only that my wolf was compelled to get to know him better.

Without giving it too much thought, I stepped closer. He responded immediately, his body language welcoming me and confirming what I already knew. He was having the same response as I was.

I wanted to say something, but I wasn't entirely sure what the best thing to say was.

He came closer, and there was a part of me that longed for him to close the distance between us. A part that was definitely being controlled by my wolf. Right now, I wasn't sure which of us was going to win in this interaction.



"My wolf has wanted you since the day we met," he murmured, his voice rich with just a hint of an accent.

"Your wolf wanting me isn't enough," I said, even as my own protested against my words and wanted nothing more than to tell him that was all I needed to know. "You haven't even told me your name."

A war started behind his eyes, one that I recognised. My heart went out to him. It wasn't easy to always be fighting against the wolf within.

"Fenrir," he said.

"Like the god." It wasn't the most dazzling thing to say, especially considering where I was.

"I am the god."

"Ah, makes sense," I responded.

"Shouldn't you be more surprised that your fated mate is a god?"

I laughed. "We met at a Jinx event, and we're at another one held by a god," I pointed out. "And my friends are all dating them." Though I had to admit that now he was asking, I was a little surprised that a god was feeling as if I was his fated mate.

"You haven't told me your name either," he said.

"Delia," I responded. "I am not a god."

He chuckled. "I guessed."

"I hate to ask this, but would you mind stepping back? My wolf is...well, I'm sure you can imagine."

He nodded, and moved away, though it seemed to be with reluctance. Which made sense. His wolf had to be making this as difficult for him as mine was for me.

"Better?" he asked.

"Barely," I responded. "My wolf is almost in control right now."

"I know the feeling."

I took a deep breath, ignoring all the people around us.

None of them were paying any attention to us anyway.

It was one of the good things about my friends all being loved up at the moment.

Chelsea and Anise were distracted by their boyfriends, while Adelaide was no doubt helping Horus with his hosting duties, leaving me to deal with my fated mate problem on my own.

Which was probably better. They'd tell me to do something reckless.

"So, what now?" I asked Fenrir. "If you give me a list of places to avoid, I can stay out of your way until this passes."

"Is that what you want?" he asked.

"I..." There was nothing I could say in response to that, especially when the answer was no. I didn't want that. "I don't know."

"We can avoid one another if you want," he said. "Or we can go on a date."

I stared at him for a moment. "A date?"

"It is what people do when they're interested in getting to know one another better and think they could have something."

"You think we could?" My heart raced. It was one thing to be standing opposite my fated mate, but quite another to be standing opposite a god telling me that he wanted something more with me.

"Our wolves certainly think we could," he said.

"And how often has yours been right?" The question slipped out without me meaning it to. That wasn't the kind of thing I should be asking so soon after meeting him.

He chuckled. "Twice."

A strange feeling came over me, but it was hard to identify exactly what it was.

"Twice?"

"I'm just about eight hundred years old, I've not lived my entire life waiting for one person," he said.

"Oh, right, of course not." I reached up and tucked a strand of hair behind my ear.

"What happened to your other fated mates?"

A sad expression crossed his face. "They died."

"I'm sorry."

"Don't be. It's been a long time since then, and neither of them would want me to be alone."

I swallowed hard. Could I really do this? Be the fated mate of someone who I knew would outlive me?

"Why didn't you make them immortal?" I asked.

He raised an eyebrow. "I didn't realise you knew that was an option."

"Well, I do."

"For one of them, I was about to make her immortal when she died. She wanted to make it special, and we had it planned. But then someone attacked our village." A haunted expression crossed his face, leaving no doubt about what the rest of that story was.

"I'm sorry." I reached out to touch his arm, half-regretting it the moment my wolf responded. I doubted she was going to listen to me if I told her that she was supposed to be calm in this moment.

"It's okay," he said, looking at my hand as if I were doing something unexpected. "It was a long time ago, I mostly think about the good memories I have of her."

I nodded. "What about your other fated mate?" I asked curiously.

"He didn't want to be immortal."

"Surely if that was the case, he wouldn't have matched as your fated mate?"

Fenrir shrugged. "I think when we first met, he didn't know that he wasn't interested

in immortality, and I didn't know that I wanted someone who would be with me for longer."

"And now?"

He raised an eyebrow. "You tell me. What's your take on immortality?"

I swallowed hard. "I haven't spent much time thinking about it."

Everything about his expression said that he didn't believe me.

In some ways, that was fair. If fate said that we were right for one another, then this was the kind of thing that our views probably lined up on.

I was sure there'd be small things that we didn't agree on, but that wasn't going to be the case for the big things.

"It's a fair question if we're going to talk about the fated mates situation," he said.

"Maybe you should buy me a drink before asking me personal questions."

He laughed. "All right, I know an all-night diner not far from here."

"An all-night diner?"

"They do a great milkshake," he said. "It'll make your wolf calmer."

"It might take more than a milkshake to do that," I muttered.

"True. But there's bright lighting, no alcohol, and no romantic music."

I laughed. "Ah, you're trying to get our wolves to behave."

"Something like that. But if you want to stay at the party, I understand."

I shook my head. "A milkshake sounds good." I wasn't going to be able to concentrate on anything else if I knew he was here.

"And then you'll tell me how you feel about immortality?" he checked.

I laughed. "Maybe you should try asking me something more basic first."

He offered me his arm and I took it, smiling as I did. While it was risky for the two of us to touch, it felt a little less so when I knew that we were planning on doing something that would help us stay in control of our wolves.

## Page 5

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DELIA

Fenrir was right about the diner. In fact, it was even less romantic than he'd sold it as, which was reassuring on several fronts. I wasn't sure it was going to be quite enough to keep my wolf in check, but at least it was a start.

Cheesy music played over the speakers, and a tired-looking waitress in a yellow dress set our milkshakes down in front of us.

"Do you want some fries?" Fenrir asked.

"Sure."

He nodded to the waitress, who disappeared, only to return a few minutes later with a basket of fries. They must have some of them ready.

"It feels a bit weird to eat fries while wearing a fancy dress," I admitted as I crunched into one. "They taste better."

He chuckled. "I think it's because they feel like an extra treat."

"Ah, something we agree on."

"I would hope we'd find a few things like that," he said.

"Mmm." I mixed my shake with my straw. "Though I wouldn't expect us to be exactly the same."

"Fate thinks we're a good match, not that we're exactly alike," he responded. "So, what brought you to the Jinx Masquerade?"

"My friend got me a ticket," I responded. "She's dating Horus. It's why I was here tonight. What about you?"

"My father got me one for the masquerade. Aphrodite invited me to the Horus Sanctuary tonight."

I paused for a moment. "Aphrodite?" Did I have to compete with a literal love goddess for him? I pushed the thought aside. I didn't even know if I wanted that, it hardly mattered who I might be competing against.

"She's an event planner," he said. "Horus can be a little bit reclusive, so most of the invitations for the event come from Aphrodite and not Horus."

"So I'm in the minority being invited by someone who works at the Sanctuary, then," I joked.

"Something like that." He picked up one of the fries and ate it. "I go to the events because I know a lot of the people there. My sister and my uncle often attend events like this too. And my father, but you want to avoid those situations."

"Why?"

"Haven't you heard the stories of Loki?" A smile twisted at the corner of his lips.

"Your father is Loki?"

"Yes. I'm guessing you don't know much about Norse mythology?"



"I can't say that I do, beyond the names," I admitted. "Though now I've got some bedtime reading to do when I get home."

He raised an eyebrow. "Perhaps I should send you some of the better stories about me for that."

"Stories of your prowess?" I put the straw between my lips, not thinking about how it might look, given the subject of the conversation.

Fenrir cleared his throat. "I can't say there are many of those. Most of the stories about me are about the threat I posed to the other gods in causing Ragnarok."

"Which I imagine would be kind of difficult to do, given that you're a wolf shifter with a few extra powers."

Surprise flitted over his face. "You know more about the gods than I'd have expected."

"My friends are dating gods. They've told me a lot of what they've learned."

"Which is how you know that immortality is an option," he said.

"Yes. I see we still got onto that fairly fast," I joked. "But yes, that's how I know."

"Can I ask your thoughts on it?" He picked up another fry.

"You can. But the answer is that I don't know how I feel about it.

I think I've always seen it as depending on the person I built my life with.

If they were immortal, then it wouldn't sit well with me if I wasn't, but if they were

mortal, then I wouldn't want to outlive them for the rest of my life. And now you know my non-answer."

"It's a good answer," he promised.

"I'm glad you think so." I looked over at him, wondering about what all of this meant. Could my wolf be right and this be the relationship?

I could feel her within me, anxious to get me to act on her desires. It was hard to think straight when she was trying to control me.

"So, where do we go from here?" I asked. "We've come for a milkshake, but what next?"

"Another date," he said. "And then another, and go from there."

"Ones with low romance?"

"Anything can be romantic," he pointed out. "But for the first few dates, I think it's probably wise for us to be in public spaces. It's easier to keep the wolves at bay that way."

"True. We don't want to rush into a mate bond."

He nodded. "It's a commitment, and one I want to make sure we're ready to make when we do."

"I get it. I've been burned by the mate bond before." I sat back in my seat and drank the rest of my milkshake. It was good, but if I was honest, I barely cared. It wasn't just my wolf who was captivated by the man opposite.

"What happened?" Fenrir asked.

I took a deep breath. I knew I'd need to talk about my past if I wanted this relationship to work, but it still felt like it revealed a lot about me, and came with an amount of vulnerability that I wasn't necessarily used to.

I supposed he'd already told me about what had happened when he'd found his fated mates, so it was only fair that I told him the same.

"I imagine the normal things that go wrong with mate bonds.

When my wolf responded to them, something about them fit and matched me, but by the time the relationship was over, things had stopped working. "

He nodded but waited for me to continue rather than saying anything else.

"For my first couple of relationships, I would say that it was definitely my fault that they didn't work.

I knew in theory that having a fated mate bond wasn't enough, but I didn't realise what that meant.

I was young and unaware that it wasn't as straightforward as having a bond. I really thought that was it."

"I was the same when I was a young wolf."

"Though I imagine that was a lot longer ago."

"A little bit," he admitted. "But I think it's just something that all wolf shifters go through at one point or another."

I shrugged. "Maybe so. I think we get lulled into a false sense of security that fated mates means that we don't have to put any work in." I set my empty glass down, but still toyed with the stem while I thought about the conversation.

"It does sound like the kind of thing that should just be perfect as soon as it happens," he agreed.

"And yet it isn't."

"It makes sense. People change and grow as they get older. Our wolves think we're perfect for one another now, but if only one of us grows over the next decade, it won't be a good match any more."

I nodded. "That was the situation with me and Todd. He was the last person my wolf thought was my fated mate. I felt like he didn't want to grow. Every time we talked about it, he'd say that we were fated, so what did it matter."

Fenrir grimaced. "It always matters."

I sighed. "I know. But I stayed for longer than I should."

"I've done that before."

"I thought you said your wolf was only right twice?"

"He's been wrong many other times," he responded.

"I'm sure we'll have many horror stories of dating we can share."

He chuckled. "I'm sure we can. And if you ever meet my sister, she'll likely tell you more of my mating mishaps."

I laughed. "Now I want to know."

"There was a time when I was younger that I might have followed around a ship's captain with puppy eyes."

I raised an eyebrow. "A ship's captain?"

Fenrir shrugged. "I liked his arms. My wolf did too. I'm sure you know what it's like when they try to take control."

"Mine's trying to do it now. I'm not sure how you're so calm right now."

"You seem calm too," he promised. "But mostly just practice. And knowing that the best way to make sure I get to know someone without my wolf being the one in charge, is to give us space and time to work through it all."

"Okay, so what's our next date?" I asked curiously.

"Bowling."

"Bowling?" There was no keeping the surprise out of my voice.

"Trust me?"

I met his gaze, realising as I did that the answer to that was yes. "All right, bowling." It was years since I'd been bowling, but it sounded kind of fun. And not like the kind of date I'd expect to go on with my fated mate.

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### FENRIR

I didn't often feel nervous. There wasn't really any reason to when I'd already been alive for eight hundred years and knew that my life was pretty set.

But waiting for Delia to arrive at the bowling alley for our date was making me feel that way.

It was similar to how I'd felt when I'd waited for my past fated mates, and how I knew that this had the potential to be something, even beyond the bond that our wolves thought we could have.

Hopefully, my wolf would calm down once he realised that I was taking his information about Delia seriously.

He'd reacted the moment I'd seen her at the masquerade, and my actions since had been in pursuit of her.

Not that I'd continue if she told me she wasn't interested, but she certainly seemed to be.

A taxi pulled up in front of the building, and she climbed out. She looked more casual than the last time I'd seen her, in well-fitted jeans and a cute shirt. But she was no less beautiful.

My wolf sprang into life immediately at the sight of her, only growing stronger in his response when her perfume hit my nose. There was absolutely no denying who she

was to me. Now the only question was whether we could actually make it work.

"Hi," she said, flipping her wavy blonde hair over her shoulder.

"Good evening," I said. "Would you like to go inside?"

"It would be weird to have our bowling date outside the alley," she pointed out. "And probably too tempting for our wolves."

I chuckled. "And so they keep controlling us."

"They probably will until the moment we seal a mating bond, or choose to walk away." She paused for a moment, seeming as if she wanted to touch me.

I got the desire. It wasn't even a sex thing, though it wasn't that I hadn't been thinking about that.

I just wanted to touch her because I wanted to show her affection.

But I also knew that it was better for us to take things at a slower pace before we got ourselves tangled in a mate bond that doesn't work out.

She smiled and pushed open the door to get inside the building. I followed her inside, wondering what I was getting myself into. This kind of thing was always complicated, and it didn't help that it was hard to think of other things when my wolf was occupying my thoughts so much.

But it would be worth it if this worked. There was nothing like sharing a life with someone who fit with me so perfectly, and it made me hope that this situation with Delia could work.

It didn't take us long to get set up on our lane, though I'd forgotten that when I'd suggested bowling that it would involve having to wear borrowed shoes.

"So, do you want to put Fenrir on the screen, or should I be putting some human name?" she asked, looking at me with a frown. "Maybe Frank?"

I snorted. "You think I look like a Frank?"

"Not at all. But all of the gods I've met have human names that are similar-sounding to their godly names."

"It's not really an issue for the Norse gods. People use our names for pets all the time, so it's not that weird to have someone called by my name. I just use Fenrir."

"Fenrir it is." She tapped the screen, making it appear with her name above it.

I had to admit that they looked good together, even if there was no reason for that to be the case other than my wolf wanting to make a mate bond with her.

"Now, I'm going to warn you, I've not been bowling since I was thirteen, and I wasn't very good at it then. "

I laughed. "I last went bowling in the nineties, so it's been a while."

"Who did you go with?" she asked curiously.

"Some friends," I responded. "No one of interest."

"Ah."

"I did have a potential fated mate around that time, but we quickly knew that it wasn't



going to work."

"How?" she asked curiously.

"She thought that the bond was enough and just wanted to jump straight into bed," I said.

She gave me a curious look. "Is that not your thing?"

"Oh, it's my thing," I assured her. "But rushing it is not. Especially when there's a risk of accidentally sealing the mating bond."

Her hand reached to her neck, and I knew exactly what she was thinking about. My wolf responded immediately to my own thoughts of claiming her.

He went even more feral at the thought of her biting me. That wouldn't just be her accepting me, it would be her claiming me, and choosing that she wanted the two of us to be mates.

I cleared my throat. It was better if I didn't think about what that would mean, it would only make it harder to focus on everything else.

Delia grabbed a hair tie from her bag and put her hair up in a ponytail before heading over to the bowling balls and making her selection. There was an adorable expression on her face as she tried out a couple of them, eventually taking an orange one over to the lane.

There was no tearing my gaze away from her as she moved, especially when the way she rolled the ball drew attention to her ass.

She turned around and caught me looking. "Like what you see?"

I chuckled uncomfortably and rubbed the back of my neck. "Sorry."

She shrugged. "It's fine. I mean, I know that your wolf is responding to me. It makes sense that other parts of you are too."

"I don't want you to think that's the only thing I'm interested in," I murmured.

"I don't." She headed over to the balls and picked up another one.

"You wouldn't have suggested a date like this if you were just interested in getting me into bed.

" She smiled, which lit up her face in a delightful way.

She headed back to the bowling lane, swaying her hips in a way that made me think that she was doing it on purpose.

Maybe this was the wrong date after all.

The ball knocked over several pins, and she shrugged. "Could be worse."

"You're doing better than I'm about to," I responded.

"I find that hard to believe."

"Watch me."

"You're not allowed to do badly just because you're trying to prove a point," she teased.

"I promise to try my best." I tried a couple of the bowling balls and selected the one I

liked the weight of. Though what did I know about it? I was hardly some kind of bowling expert.

The pins had been reset while we'd been talking, and I took my position in front of them. I let the ball go, and it trundled down the lane without nearly enough speed to actually manage anything.

A thud sounded as it landed in the gutter. I turned around to find Delia covering her laughter.

"I'm sorry," she said. "Laughter is an involuntary reaction."

I grinned. "It's fine, I think I can survive making a fool of myself." I headed over to where the balls were being sent. "Hopefully, I won't do it again."

"I don't mind even if you do," she promised.

I took my ball back to the lane and tried again. This time, the ball actually hit a pin, but that was the best I could say about it.

"We should celebrate that," Delia said with amusement in her voice.

"We should, it's probably going to be my best score all night."

"I'd say I could give you some pointers, but I'm not sure I'm actually much better at bowling than you are. I can offer you some consolatory nachos?"

"Nachos sound great."

"Good, and afterwards, maybe a burger. No one can eat a burger sexily," she said.

I laughed. "Is that your plan?"

"Yes. Our wolves need to behave, and that's the best plan I've got for making that possible. Let's not give them a reason to ignore us. Mine really wants to ignore my rational thoughts."

I leaned against the high table beside me. "Oh, mine too."

"So, burgers. In a well-lit, greasy place," she said. "Should we be worried that this is the kind of thing we're doing while we're dating?"

I shrugged. "Not if we're having fun."

"I'm having a lot of fun," she responded, picking up a ball.

"Me too." I knew this was early in the process of getting to know one another, but it was already clear to me that while our wolves were impatient, they also seemed to be right

We just had to see where this was going, and try not to let our wolves take control.

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DELIA

I scrunched up the paper from around my burger and dropped it into the nearest bin. My wolf wasn't happy about my choice of food, but my stomach and taste buds were.

"There's nothing like a mediocre burger," I said as I waited for Fenrir to get rid of his own rubbish.

He laughed. "If that's going to impress you, then I think we're going to have a fun time dating."

"I wouldn't say it impresses me," I responded. "But it was a good end to the bowling date."

"Mmm, though next time, I think I'm going to have to think of something that doesn't involve me losing terribly."

"I don't think bowling is your strong suit," I admitted, lingering in the doorway to the burger place. "So, erm, what now?"

"I guess we go home," he said.

"You could walk me back to my flat?" I suggested, even though I knew that would put us in temptation's way. After a whole night together, I was reasonably sure we could handle it.

"If you'd like that."

"I would. It's not far from here. I was actually glad when you suggested this bowling alley because I could walk to it," I said.

He nodded and fell into step beside me. "Do you prefer to walk?"

"Yes. I have a car, but it's such a fuss getting a parking space near my building that I normally prefer to walk if I can. Plus, it's cheaper than a gym membership."

He laughed. "I wouldn't know."

"Eurgh, don't tell me that immortality has just frozen you looking like this." I stopped to wait for the lights on the road to change.

"Definitely not. But I set myself up with a home gym the moment I could. I don't like exercising around people. I worry that my wolf will show himself."

"Ah. I hadn't thought of that. I've always been the solo runner kind of fitness person."

"I can see that." The way he looked at me made my blood race and my wolf come to attention. She was going to be difficult to control if this continued. "Do you like running in the morning, or at night?"

"Trying to work out if I'm going to be getting you up at five am?" I joked.

"Something like that."

"Well, I wouldn't wake you up, but I do prefer an early morning run," I admitted.

"It's fine if you did. I work out before breakfast."

"Is this where I suggest we could be having a different kind of workout before

breakfast soon?" I joked, bumping my shoulder against his as we walked.

He laughed. "You could, but we're not supposed to be encouraging our wolves."

"Maybe it's you I'm trying to encourage, not your wolf," I responded.

"I can appreciate that," he said.

I sighed. "Dating with a wolf makes things a lot harder than it needs to be."

"It does," he agreed.

"When I was in my early twenties, I used to find myself wishing that I didn't have to deal with her." I pressed my hand against my chest even at the memories. It wasn't my wolf's fault that she made things harder, I'd just been born with her.

"I wasn't twenty, but I went through that phase."

"How old were you?" I asked curiously.

"About two hundred, I think. It's hard to keep track of the years sometimes."

"So you don't know how old you are?"

"I know what year I was born," he responded. "So if I have a calculator, I can work out how old I am. But sometimes, it doesn't really seem to matter. I've been around a long time, and that's that."

"I suppose that's true."

"Does it bother you?" he asked. "Dating someone older than you?"

I shrugged. "I guess it depends if you're going to start acting like I have to stay at home and do all the chores."

"Definitely not."

"Then no. Even if I was in the normal dating pool, there'd be a chance of me dating someone older. Elves, fae, and vampires all have lifespans that are much higher than mine. What's adding a god into the mix?"

"Fair enough."

"Does it bother you? Having to date younger?"

He shook his head. "I guess I stopped really seeing that kind of thing a while ago. I mean, it would be weird if I'd known you since you were a child, but that's not what's happened here."

"Definitely not. You'll be glad to know that I'm a mostly-functioning adult," I joked.

"Then we don't have any issues."

"No, it seems not." I smiled at him, only noticing where we were a moment later, and trying not to feel too disappointed about arriving at our destination. "This is me," I said, gesturing to the building behind me.

He nodded, an intense expression on his face.

"I had a good time tonight," I said. "Maybe we can do it again sometime."

"Sometime soon?" he asked, a hopeful note in his voice.



I nodded. "There's a food market on Thursday that's not far from here. Would you like to go?"

"A food market?"

"Mmmhmm. It fits the parameters of what we want. There are people around, lots of food that it's hard to eat in a sexy way, and it's fun. Isn't that what we're looking for?"

"It sounds good," he promised. "Will you message me the address, and I can meet you there?"

"Of course." I hesitated a moment. As much as I wanted to avoid giving my wolf too much control, I really wanted to kiss him good night.

Maybe I should settle for a cheek kiss instead. I leaned in to brush my lips against his cheek, but he moved, bringing our lips closer together than I'd anticipated.

My breathing hitched, and the only thing I could think of was what it would feel like if he kissed me again. Could I do that? Could I risk what it might unleash if my wolf thought she could get her way?

"Maybe one kiss won't hurt."

He didn't need me to say it twice, and closed the gap between us to capture my lips with his.

I expected his movements to be demanding, for his wolf to be in control, but that wasn't what happened.

Instead, he kissed me with reverence, and with soft movements that made it seem as if he was committing my lips to memory.

I wrapped my arms around his neck and deepened the kiss, enjoying the reaction that was happening within me. It was nothing to do with my wolf, though she was eager for me to experience more of this.

Fenrir smoothed a hand over my lower back, the touch both completely new, and feeling like it was meant to be like that.

Everything about this just felt like it was the right kind of kiss.

The kind that made me weak at the knees for more reasons than just desire, even if that didn't make any sense when we'd only just started to get to know one another.

The kiss ended, but we didn't step away from one another. I met his gaze, surprised to discover how intently he was looking at me.

A small part of me wanted to ask if he would come inside, but I knew better than that. This date was supposed to be about keeping our wolves in check, not encouraging them to make their move.

"I should go," I whispered.

He nodded. "I think that's probably a good idea."

"Oh." I stepped away, only for him to reach out and grab my hand.

"Not because I want you to."

"The wolves," I said sadly.

"The wolves," he agreed. "But it'll be worth it, Delia."

The way he said my name sent a pleasant shiver through me and reminded me of what was at stake. "I'll see you on Thursday?" I asked hopefully.

"Yes," he responded. "And I look forward to it."

For a moment, I thought he was going to lean in to kiss me again, but he didn't, instead, turning and making his way back down the street.

I watched him go, trying my best to ignore my wolf wanting me to call out for him to come back and go up to my flat with me.

That wasn't the kind of thing I should be doing.

Not when we'd both made it clear that we want to get to know one another properly before we go further.

Though I didn't think I was going to be able to restrain myself for too much longer.

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*Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 4:27 pm*

DELIA

Even though I was waiting for Fenrir outside the food market, I realised that I had no doubt that he was going to show up.

And not just because of the wolf. He just seemed like a dependable person, and I liked that.

The atmosphere in the park was great, and while I'd prefer to have a date somewhere more private under usual circumstances, this wasn't that.

Though there was a part of me whispering that my flat wasn't far from here.

I wanted to blame my wolf for that train of thought, but I knew it wasn't true.

This was all me. Spending time with Fenrir made me feel at ease, even if I knew that both of our wolves were trying to make us seal the bond before we were ready to.

I was almost too lost in my thoughts to notice him arriving.

Feeling bold, I leaned in and pressed a kiss against his cheek.

The urge to kiss him on the lips was almost impossible to ignore, but I managed, stepping back so that I could put some space between us.

We might have kissed the other night, but I knew that it was better not to tempt fate until we'd at least spent some time together.

"Something smells good," he said.

"I think it's the fried onions," I said. "The food market comes here once a month during the summer, and I always come down to it for dinner. I'm actually excited to be able to come with someone. Though it looks like it might rain."

He shrugged. "A bit of water isn't going to be an issue."

"True. And it's been sunny all week."

"So, if you come down here all the time, then you know where the best place to start is."

"I think that depends," I said. "Do you want food of your own, or are you okay sharing?"

"I'm okay with sharing if you are."

"Good, because that means that we can try more things. There's a stall that serves delicious Korean fried chicken. I think that would be a good place to start."

"It sounds good," he responded. "I do like Korean fried chicken."

"No doubt you've probably had it in Korea."

He chuckled. "If we do seal our mating bond, maybe you can too. We can head to Korea through the portals and be there within a few hours."

I stared at him for a moment. "The portals to the god realm?"

"Yes. We'd go in the one closest to us and come out of one in Seoul, or wherever else

in the world we wanted to go."

"I never thought about what it would actually mean to date a god," I admitted. "That would be good. Though it might ruin Korean food from other places for me."

"Perhaps." He reached out and put a hand on my lower back, and I leaned into his touch.

Satisfaction rolled off my wolf in waves, though she wasn't alone in that. I could feel how much I liked it too. I didn't do anything to break the contact until we got to the stand and I had to order some of the food.

The woman put some of the fried chicken pieces into a tray and handed them to me. I held the tray out to Fenrir once we were away from the line, and he took one of the chicken pieces, popping it in his mouth.

"That's good," he said.

"But not as good as in Korea?" I asked.

"The best I've ever had is actually in a restaurant in the god realm," he said. "We can go once we're a little more settled."

"You don't trust us until then?" I asked.

"I think it's too close to where I live," he said.

"So is this a good time to tell you that we're close to where I live?"

He chuckled, a warm and inviting sound that I wanted to hear more of. And luckily, it seemed like I was going to. "I picked up on that when I walked you home the other

night, I just didn't want to bring it up in case you didn't want me to."

"I don't mind you knowing," I responded. "And this is our third date."

"Is this where I'm supposed to pretend that I don't know where that means?" he joked. "And follow it up with that I'm eight hundred years old, I don't have a clue about modern dating conventions."

"You can if you want to. But I also know that the three-date rule doesn't have to apply to us."

"I guess we can see how we feel in a couple of hours," he said.

A warm feeling spread through me. I liked the idea of us potentially going somewhere more private, even if it did seem fast.

On the other hand, our wolves had certainly wanted it to be faster.

"What should we eat next?" he asked.

"That depends on what you like the sound of. There's a place that does burgers, or a place that does Jamaican chicken."

"The chicken, I think," he said. "It sounds more interesting."

"Good point. There's also a place that does really good fried rice." I pointed to it.

"Why don't I go to get that, and you get the chicken?" he suggested. "Meet you back here to share?"

"Sounds good." I lingered for a moment, wanting to kiss him goodbye even if we

weren't really at a place to do that yet. If things kept going like this, then I was definitely going to want to see whether he was interested in coming back to my flat after this.

Instead, I went over to the van selling the chicken and ordered some of it, thankful that the queues didn't seem to be too bad this evening, and that I'd be able to get back to Fenrir.

He'd claimed one of the tables, and I went to sit down beside him. Our legs brushed against one another, filling me with the thrill that came from dancing around someone I wanted.

He held out a wooden fork to me, but I shook my head, digging into my bag and pulling out a couple of metal ones.

"I hate the feel of wood in my mouth."

He snorted. "Is that supposed to sound as suggestive as it does?"

"If it did, then I'm sure you'd be disappointed."

"I don't think you could possibly disappoint me," he promised.

My breathing caught in my throat. It wasn't just the words he was saying, but the way that he looked at me while he did. "I don't have any problems with that kind of wood."

"I can't say I'm disappointed to hear that," he joked.

"But I did bring you a fork too. I thought it was weird if I only brought one for myself."



"Thanks, I appreciate it." He took one from me, his finger so brushing against mine as he did. It was going to be a long couple of hours, even if I was hungry.

I dug into the rice, letting out a satisfied hum as I enjoyed the taste. "I realised I never asked you what you do for a living," I said. "Unless you're about to tell me that you're a god and just have all of your money from investments you made decades ago."

He laughed. "I mean, I do have some of those. And I live in the god realm, which helps with that too. But I work as a high-end tailor."

"Unexpected."

"What did you expect?"

"I don't know. A lumberjack? Something woodsy?"

"That's just stereotyping wolf shifters," he pointed out. "Though I did do a stint as a personal trainer."

"That doesn't surprise me." I looked up and down him without even fully meaning to.

"What about you?"

"I work in HR. It's not my dream, but it pays the bills. I do lead a yoga class too. That makes me very flexible."

"I shall try not to think about that too much."

"You can think about it as much as you want," I responded.

He cleared his throat, clearly trying his best not to think about it. I leaned closer to get

some more food, knowing that it would likely affect him and feeling a bit mischievous for it.

"So, what is the dream, if it isn't HR?" He asked, clearly trying to change the subject so he stopped thinking about whether I was actually flexible or not. He leaned over and speared a piece of chicken with his fork. "Mmm, that's good."

"It is," I agreed. "I've always wanted to be a hairdresser. I know that sounds like such a boring dream..."

"It's not," he said firmly. "What's stopping you?"

"Money," I responded. "I shouldn't really be talking about that yet, should I?"

"Though it felt right to, especially when we weren't exactly going for a short-term thing."

We were taking things slower than we normally would because both of us saw the potential for a long-term relationship, and one that could last a very long time.

It was better to be open about these things.

"You can tell me whatever you're comfortable with," he promised.

"When I left school, my parents weren't in a position to support me studying for longer, so I started working. I have a savings account for going to beauty school, but it's been nearly eighteen years and I haven't actually gone back."

"You should do."

"Maybe."

"You only get one life," Fenrir said firmly. "You should make sure you make the most of it."

"An interesting take from someone immortal," I responded.

"My life might be long, but a lot of the people around me have had limited time in this world. It's better to tell people that they should be true to themselves before they realise they've run out of time."

"I get that you think that, but I've had to focus on other things."

He nodded and pushed the tray with the last piece of chicken towards me. "I had to do the same when I was younger. Though it wasn't as possible to choose your career as it is now."

"Mmm, I wonder what I'd have ended up doing if I'd been born when you were."

"Maybe you'd have become a goddess," he said, a serious expression in his eyes as he looked at me.

"Hardly. I'm not nearly special enough for that."

"The only reason you think that gods and goddesses are special is because they're deities," he points out. "Most of us started out just like you are now. A normal person just going about their life."

"I find that hard to believe."

He shrugged. "The only thing special about me is that my father was immortal."

When I was in my late twenties, Loki asked Odin to make me immortal.

After that, the rumours of me betraying the rest of the Norse gods and causing Ragnarok started, and were eventually enough to make me a god.

It's only a circumstance of birth that made me special. "

"Isn't that true for a lot of different people?" I asked.

"True."

"So, did they really chain you up?"

He laughed. "Yes, but it was a bet. I won a chest of jewels for getting free."

"What would you have lost if you hadn't broken the chains?"

"My dignity," he joked.

A wide smile spread over my face. "You couldn't have that, could you?"

"Definitely not," he grinned. "So, we've had lots of savoury stuff, is there more you want, or should we go sweet?"

"Sweet is good. And for that, it's got to be churros."

"I've never had them."

"What? You're eight hundred years old and you've never had churros?" Of all the things he'd told me, that one had to be the most shocking.

He shrugged. "I've never had a chance to."

"Then we are definitely getting churros." I got to my feet, pausing as a big fat drop of rain fell on my head. I held out my hand, trying to gauge if it was a one-off or if we were about to get rained out. "Maybe we should get some churros and then go back to my place," I mused.

Fenrir looked at me with something like longing in his deep blue eyes. "Are you okay with that?"

I swallowed hard, knowing exactly what he was asking. If we went back to mine, there would be no denying the wolves or what they wanted.

"Yes," I whispered. For a moment, I thought he might not have heard my response over the noise of the other people at the food festival, but he nodded once, removing all of those fears.

And igniting a feeling within me that I hadn't felt since my first night with Todd. But somehow, I knew that this was going to be better.

## Page 9

*Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 4:27 pm*

DELIA

It was hard to sit at my kitchen table and eat our dessert, especially when there was more than one part of me screaming that I should be taking Fenrir into a very different part of my flat so that we could spend more time together.

But I didn't want to rush this, and given the fact he hadn't touched me since we got here, I had to assume that he felt the same.

"You've got chocolate sauce on your cheek," I told him as I ate the last of my churro.

He lifted his hand to swipe it off, but only made it worse.

"I'll get it." I hopped off my chair and went around to the other side of the table so that I was closer to him. I wiped my finger along his cheek, taking the chocolate sauce with it.

Not really thinking about it, I held my finger to his lips. His gaze locked on mine as he took it in his mouth and swirled his tongue around, removing the sauce, and doing funny things to my stomach in response.

My breathing became ragged, even as I pulled my hand away.

We both knew what was going to happen if we came back here, but now that it was imminent, it was even harder to ignore the desire rising up within me.

And it was all me. My wolf was satisfied that I was doing what she wanted and was

choosing not to interfere.

I was grateful for that. This was about me and not her.

"I want to kiss you," Fenrir murmured.

"You should," I responded, leaning closer until I could feel his breath on my lips. Anticipation built inside me, and I closed the gap, brushing my lips against his.

He responded immediately, his hand threading through my hair and pulling me closer. It ignited every part of me, making me crave so much more of his touch, and to find out how it would feel for us to be closer.

I broke the kiss, losing myself for a moment in his gaze.

"We should move," I whispered, finding his hand and guiding him through my flat to my bedroom. At least I'd tidied up earlier in case our date led to this. I'd even gone as far as to make the bed and ensure there were condoms in the bedside table.

I let go of his hand and strip off my shirt, not wanting to wait for him to do it for me.

He watched me with hungry eyes.

"You have to strip too," I said as I wiggled off my jeans. It was unfortunate that it wasn't possible in a sexier way, but from the way he was looking at me, I didn't think it mattered to him.

He nodded and started removing his clothes, even as I managed to get myself naked.

I should feel self-conscious, but I didn't. It was impossible to when every look Fenrir gave me was full of hunger and desire.

There was absolutely no doubt in my mind that he wanted me, and that it had very little to do with the wolf within.

They were only telling us that they thought we were compatible, the rest of our feelings were ours alone.

I sat back on the bed and watched as he got rid of the rest of his clothes, taking the time to admire his toned physique, and the evidence of how interested he was in me standing proud and ready.

My mouth went dry at the thought, and I couldn't wait to discover exactly how it would feel to have him touching me like that.

He stalked over to the bed and tipped my head back, leaning in to kiss me far deeper and more hungrily than before.

I placed a hand on his chest, smoothing it over the firm muscles. My heart raced, and the need to feel him closer to me was too much to ignore. I tugged him down onto the bed, and he came with me, his hands roaming over my body and only increasing the need that was growing within me.

His fingers grazed over my nipple, and I gasped, arching up into his touch and silently begging him for me.

He seemed to know what I was asking for, and his hand slipped down between us.

I parted my legs, looking up to meet his gaze as his fingers found the specific spot that I knew would be my undoing.

A moan escaped me almost immediately. It should bother me that he was managing to achieve this so quickly, but it didn't. I just wanted more.



He slipped two fingers inside me, while using his thumb to keep the pressure where I needed it. I leaned my head back and tried my best to focus on something other than the pleasure building within me. Not because I didn't want to feel it, but because I didn't want it to end too soon.

I wasn't fully aware of anything until his teeth grazed my nipple, and it all became too much.

"Fenrir," I murmured, uncertain if it was a plea for him to continue, or for him to do more.

He took it as the latter, causing the dam of pleasure growing within me to burst. I cried out and pushed my body against him, desperate for more of everything.

His touch between my legs, his mouth on my breast.

Everything. I just wanted more.

Nerves all over my body responded, tingling and hoping for more from the man who clearly knew just how to please me.

This was going to be a fun night if this moment was anything to go by.

I was breathing heavily by the time my awareness returned to me, and I found him looking at me with a grin on his face.

"What?" I murmured.

"You're beautiful."

"I'm glad you think so." I put a hand on his chest and traced patterns there, moving

gradually lower with each pass.

"And I want to see that happen again."

"I'm sure there'll be plenty of time," I said as I reached my destination and wrapped my hand around him. He twitched beneath my touch, making it clear that he was responding to me.

I started stroking gently, pleased when I saw his eyes glaze over. After he'd made me feel so good, I wanted to return the favour.

"Please tell me you have condoms," he murmured.

"I do." I let go, with a little reluctance, and leaned over to grab one from the bedside table.

"You're prepared."

"We were going to end up here at some point," I responded. "I'd rather be over-prepared than caught without at a crucial moment."

He laughed. "Fair enough."

I tore open the packet and rolled the condom onto him, noticing that he responded to this touch too. Anticipation built more within, only spurred on more by the release I'd already experienced.

Fenrir leaned in and kissed me with surprising tenderness, given the situation. I deepened the kiss, eager for more and to feel what it would be like to have him inside me. I didn't want to wait longer, and I didn't need to.

He guided himself to my entrance, and I wrapped my legs around his waist, pulling him deeper even as he pushed into me. I gasped at how good it felt, and tipped my head back.

Fenrir feathered kisses against my ear lobe and down my neck, his movements haphazard and clearly influenced by the pleasure he was feeling from being inside me. I crossed my ankles and pulled him deeper, and closer to where I wanted him to be.

His teeth grazed against my neck, and I let out a moan. I'd never been particularly sensitive there, but it was different to feel his teeth against my skin, primal even. A tiny voice whispered in the back of my mind that I knew what it was about, but I didn't care. I just wanted to feel.

"I need to stop," Fenrir said through bated breaths.

I moaned. "No, don't stop."

He shook his head, and the next thing I knew, cold air prickled my skin, and his weight had lifted off me.

I shuffled back and propped myself up so I could look at him, trying not to feel hurt by his sudden disappearance. He was standing at the end of the bed with a conflicted expression on his face.

"Fenrir?" I asked softly.

He groaned and closed his eyes. "I just need a moment," he murmured.

"What happened?" My voice cracked, and I tried not to think about how much of a bad sign it was for my fated mate to want to get out of bed with me.

He sighed and sat down, but was careful not to touch me. "I had to stop. If I didn't, I'd have bitten you."

"Oh." I lifted my hand to my neck, where his teeth had not long been.

"You and I both know that biting isn't something that should be done lightly."

I swallowed and pulled the blanket over me. "You don't want to be my mate." I knew I was being unreasonable, and that I didn't want him to bite me and seal the mate bond either, but for a brief moment, my wolf was in control, and she wanted him to do that.

"That's not what I said." He looked at me with all kinds of indecision in his blue eyes.

"I don't want to rush this just because our wolves say we should. I am more than my wolf, and you are more than yours."

"True."

"When we're ready, we'll talk about it."

"Okay." There was a hint of disappointment within me, but there was also something else.

An appreciation for the fact that he didn't want to rush this.

I felt like I'd done that more times than I could count when it came to the people my wolf had identified as potential fated mates, and I'd paid the price for it.

"I'm sorry, I know that's not necessarily what you want to hear," he said.

"It's fine," I murmured. "I mean, it's disappointing. I thought we were having fun."

"We were," he assured me. "Or I certainly was."

"Then we should just be more careful." There was a part of me that wanted to let this go just so that I didn't have to face the rejection, but I knew that wasn't actually the right thing to do if I wanted this relationship to work.

We had to learn how to trust each other, especially when it came to things like this.

"Careful how?"

"Well, you could stay away from my neck for one," I said. "And I'll stay away from yours." I might not have had the urge to bite in that exact moment, but I knew there was a chance of it.

He chuckled. "That might be easier said than done."

I shook my head and dropped the sheet from around me.

His gaze immediately darkened, and I could feel his desire just from the way he was looking at me.

It caused a hunger to rise up within me, almost completely chasing away how it had felt for him to pull away.

No doubt that was partly because I could feel the desire pouring off him.

I pushed back on his shoulders until he was lying back and checked that the condom was still in place. My wolf might have convinced me that I wanted a mate, but I wasn't about to let her trick me into children when I wasn't anywhere near ready for that step.

I straddled his hips, guiding him into me. My breath caught in my throat at the feeling of him filling me. I rocked back and forth, feeling the pleasure start to curl up inside me as I moved.

His hands landed on my hips, guiding my movements but keeping our teeth far enough away from one another's necks that it felt safe.

Though maybe we were just kidding ourselves on that front.

It was always possible that we could get carried away and forget that we were supposed to be avoiding biting one another.

I cried out as we moved in a way that gave me pleasure that was impossible to ignore.

Fenrir seemed to realise that, and his hand moved inwards until it found the precise spot that would bring me to my release.

My thoughts were muddled, and I quickly felt like they were disappearing completely as the release took over.

My body began to shake, and I reached down to grab hold of his wrist, hoping to keep his attention on just the right spot.

If he stopped, then the pleasure would be over, and I wasn't ready for that.

I wanted this to last for so much longer.

I was dimly aware of Fenrir finding his own release with me, only enhancing my own. I loved the way it felt for us to share this, and it made me want more of it.

More of him.

I collapsed onto the bed, my breathing coming ragged. "See," I murmured. "Fun without biting."

He chuckled. "And are there other things you have in mind that we can do to avoid biting?" he asked.

"Plenty," I responded. "And plenty more time for us to try them before we decide whether we want to bite or not."

He sighed. "I know that it probably feels personal that I didn't want to..."

I swallowed hard. "It hurt in the moment," I responded. "But I understand what you meant by saying you didn't want to do it. Being mates is...complicated."

He chuckled and shifted in the bed so he could look at me differently.

"It is. But I'm looking forward to discovering all the complications with you.

" He reached out to touch my waist, the simple contact making my body respond.

Just like it had only been a matter of time before we ended up here, I could tell that it was only going to be a matter of time before we ended up biting one another.

But that was okay. It wasn't that we weren't going to do it, it was just that we didn't want to do something like that in the heat of the moment. It had to be a decision, and I appreciated that.

## Page 10

*Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 4:27 pm*

DELIA

There was something about waking up in someone else's arms that was different from waking up alone.

It was better.

I shuffled further back, pressing myself against Fenrir and feeling him harden against my thigh. It sent another thrill through me as I thought back on the fun we'd had last night. And the fun we could have this morning.

"You're insatiable," he murmured sleepily.

"It's my wolf," I joked.

He chuckled and pulled me closer, leaning in to nip my ear. "Is that just an excuse?"

"Mmhmm."

"I hate to break it to you, but I might need to eat before we do anything else."

"I've got something you can eat," I joked.

He laughed. "Actual food."

"I know." I turned around in his arms, seeing him looking at me with adoration in his eyes. I lifted my hand to trace the planes of his face. "I'm afraid that while I



remembered to buy condoms, my cupboards are fairly bare when it comes to interesting breakfast. I can offer you some porridge?"

"Porridge is a good breakfast," he said.

"Okay, so cinnamon bun porridge or apple and sultana?"

"What?"

"They're the flavours I have. It's from this fancy oat place. All the ingredients are good, they're just mixed together."

"Which do you like best?"

"Both, that's why I have them," I responded. "I might also have some cherry bakewell. I didn't like that one very much, but if that's your thing, then I can find it."

"It's fine. I think cinnamon bun, maybe?"

"Okay." I leaned in and kissed him.

He pulled me closer, deepening the kiss and making me think that he might not want breakfast first after all. Eventually, he let go, a wide smile on his face.

I threw off the covers and got out of bed, scooping his shirt off the floor. "I'm borrowing your shirt."

"Sure, but why?"

"So you can't wear it." I slipped it over my head, enjoying that it smelled of him, even if the man himself was in my bed, and I probably smelled of him.

"Fair enough."

"And because it's one of the perks of being with a guy," I said.

"I'll take your word for it."

"You must know. You said that one of your mates was a man."

"I did," he agreed. "But he would have been horrified if I'd even suggested wearing one of his shirts. He was smaller than me."

"Ah, yes. It was like that with my ex too. She was smaller than me. She did let me use her moisturiser though. It was good stuff, I still buy the same brand." I froze in place. "Is that weird?"

He shrugged. "Not really. Your past doesn't just disappear from your life because you've met someone new. I'm sure there are other things you do because your exes did them too."

"An ex bought me my coffee machine," I admitted. "And nothing anyone can say will make me give that up."

"Then I'd better taste the coffee." He got out of bed and searched for his boxers on the floor, pulling them on, but not seeming to be bothered by any other clothing.

I didn't mind. In fact, I liked it a lot, it meant that I was going to be able to enjoy the sight in front of me as much as I wanted to.

I gestured for him to follow me through to the kitchen, though he knew where it was. We hadn't spent much time here last night, but we had eaten our churros, the detritus of which was still strewn over the table. I scooped it up and threw it into the bin.

"What kind of coffee do you like?" I asked.

"If we're talking fancy coffee, I like vanilla lattes," Fenrir responded as he took a seat at the kitchen table.

He looked at home there, and I could certainly get used to seeing him there.

Though no doubt his home was going to be better than mine, and if we were going to move in together, then that was where we'd choose.

I froze.

"Delia?" he asked, leaning forward with genuine concern written on his face.

"I'm sorry, I was just surprised by the direction of my thoughts."

He raised an eyebrow. "Caused by coffee?"

"I was thinking about us moving in together," I half-whispered. "And it shocked me that I was thinking about that so soon."

"Ah. I think that's normal."

"I very much doubt it. Most of my friends waited months to even start talking about moving in with their boyfriends. It was certainly longer than three dates."

"Were any of them fated mates?" he asked.

"No." I selected a vanilla latte pod and slid it into the coffee machine. I was sure it wouldn't be anywhere near as good as the coffee he could get from a coffee shop, but it was what I had, so it would have to do.

"Then that's the difference. I'm not saying that fated mates should be a shortcut, but I think it does play with our idea of commitment. The wolf thinks that it's found someone who is a perfect match, so that means things are more serious from the first date."

"I suppose." The coffee machine beeped, and I pulled the mug out from underneath, setting it down in front of him before returning to make my own coffee. "I just never wanted to be that person who disregarded logic just because my wolf told me to."

"You're hardly that," Fenrir assured me. "We've taken things slow."

"Have we?" I gestured to his shirt.

"We had sex on our third-ish date, and we didn't bite one another. I think that's a fairly normal speed."

"Third-ish?"

"I'm not sure the milkshakes count. We ran into one another at an event and then ditched it to go for food. Hardly an official date."

"Oh, true." I hadn't thought about it like that, but now he said it, I realised that he was right.

I pulled my coffee off the machine and set it down next to the stove so that I could make some porridge. Maybe it wasn't the most romantic breakfast to make, but it felt good to be doing something so mundane while he was in the kitchen with me.

"So, last night," he said.

"The sex?" I checked.

"Nearly biting you," he responded.

"Oh." I reached up to touch my neck. "Thank you for that. I know I didn't react the best..."

"You reacted in a natural way. But I promise, Delia, I wasn't rejecting you , or your wolf. Far from it. I was worried that if we carried on like we were, then I was going to bite you."

"I know." I pulled out the bag of oats and measured two portions into the pan before adding milk. "I truly do. I can't even explain why I felt so disappointed that you didn't do it. I don't want to rush into anything either."

"Probably because it's something that comes from a part of us that isn't necessarily in sync with our logical brains."

I laughed. "That's one way to describe the wolf." I leaned back against the counter while stirring the porridge without really looking. "Sometimes, I feel like she's a separate entity from me. Except when I shift. That's when we feel the most at one."

"That's how I feel about mine too." He picked up his coffee and took a sip. "Kudos to your ex, by the way. This is good coffee."

"If I ever talked to him, then I'd tell him you thought so."

"Would that be my cue to act all protective and possessive?" Fenrir joked.

"Do you feel that way?"

"No. I trust my partners to act in a way that matches the rules of our relationship."

I frowned, trying to work out what he meant. "What?"

He shrugged. "I've had all kinds of relationships over the years.

Some of them have had different rules about what was acceptable and what wasn't. If we agreed to be monogamous, then I would expect my partner not to sleep with anyone else.

But if we agreed to an open relationship, I couldn't hold it against my partner if they did. "

A growl escaped me without it meaning to, and I covered my mouth. "I'm sorry."

"Okay, so no open relationships for us," he said.

"No. I mean, yes. I mean...eurgh." I checked on the porridge, discovering it was done. I split it between two bowls and headed over to the table, putting one of them in front of Fenrir along with a spoon. "I would be open to discussing it, I guess. It's just not really for me."

"That's fine. I didn't love it either," he said.

"My ex wanted an open relationship. The one who gave me the coffee maker. He was surprised when I said no. But not as surprised as I was when I found out that he was sleeping with other people. So much for fated mates on that front, right?"

Fenrir grimaced. "I'm sorry."

"It's fine. The feeling from my wolf had faded by that point, and I knew deep down that the end of the relationship had come.

I just held on because I felt like I should.

I'd already had three failed mate bonds before that, and I didn't want another one.

And now you must think that I'm going around making mate bonds with just anyone.  
"

"Not at all."

"But you've only had two in the past eight hundred years," I pointed out.

"Two successful mate bonds," he corrected.

"I must have had a couple of dozen failed ones.

Some of them didn't even last beyond a couple of days.

Others lasted a bit longer. And that's without counting the period of my life where I insisted on avoiding all wolf shifters and dating without any intention of finding my fated mate. "

I dug my spoon into my porridge. "Do you think all wolves go through that phase?"

"Almost certainly," he agreed.

"It was kind of fun," I admitted. "Not having the pressure of the mate bond. I was going to a load of Jinx events in the hope of trying to find someone that I connected with without one, and that's where I met Todd."

"Your recent ex?"

I nodded. "He made my wolf react the moment I met him. And at first, it was great. And then it wasn't."

"Some failed mate bonds are like that."

"And ours?" I asked. "What's going to make ours different?"

"Maybe nothing," he responded. "But maybe everything. I want my wolf to be right."

"Me too," I said in a whisper.

"I think they are," he said.

I nodded. "It feels different from the other times."

" Maybe it was because I'd waited longer before jumping into a potential mating."

The other times, I'd very much let my wolf take the driving seat.

But this time, she was a passenger. I wasn't ignoring her, but I was taking steps to make sure that Fenrir matched me in ways that went beyond what she needed, and hopefully, that would set us up for a long time to come.



*Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 4:27 pm*

FENRIR

The doorbell of my studio sounded, and I picked up my phone to answer it, seeing my uncle on the other side of the camera.

"It's open," I said, not watching his response. He'd been here enough times that I knew he knew what to do.

Sure enough, the creak of the stairs sounded, and he appeared at the threshold taking up as much space as he usually did. I supposed that was what came with being Thor.

"Your suit's ready," I said. "Let me grab it."

"Thanks. I appreciate it. I know it's not that long since you last made me one."

"It's been longer than you think," I responded. "And that one was black. The blue of the new one will look good on you." I headed over to the rack of garment bags and selected the one with his name on it.

"Thanks." He took it from me. "Same as usual for payment?"

I nodded. "Just transfer it over. How's Daisy?"

A smile spread over his face at the mention of his girlfriend. "She's good. Things are going well. I was thinking about asking her to move in with me."

"That's great," I responded, trying not to think about Delia and the fact that she'd

talked about us doing that last week. She was right, it was too soon, but that didn't mean it wasn't on my mind. "Do you think she'll say yes?" I asked in the hope that I could avoid talking about my own thoughts.

"I hope so. Though I know she likes living close to her metal-working studio, so maybe she'll be reluctant about that."

"What does she do when she stays at yours?"

"She uses part of my forge," he said.

"Maybe you could change it so that part of the forge is just a studio of her own?" I suggested, thinking about ways I could change my own house in order to make it more suited to Delia when she moved in. Apparently, it wasn't even an if in my head, but a when.

"I can see about that," he said. "So, Hel said you were seeing someone."

"My sister should learn to keep her mouth shut."

Thor chuckled. "And who is going to make her do that? She's scarier than the rest of our pantheon put together. I'd rather take on Odin than Hel."

I laughed. "Fair point. But yes, I met someone. She's nice."

My uncle raised an eyebrow. "Nice?"

"She's great..." The doorbell went again, cutting through the conversation. I frowned, not really sure who it would be. I didn't have any other appointments today. "Sorry, one second."

Thor shrugged. "Do what you've got to do."

I picked up my phone and clicked through to the camera, my heart constricting as I took in the blonde outside my door.

I cleared my throat and clicked the microphone button. "Hey."

"Hi," Delia responded. "I know you're not expecting me, but I was in the area and I thought you might want a coffee." She lifted her hands to show a couple of cups in their holder.

Thor gave me a curious look, but I ignored him.

"The door's open, it's the first floor," I said in response.

She nodded and pushed open the door. Unlike with my uncle, I waited a few moments to make sure that she'd gotten inside okay before I set my phone down.

I looked over at the other god to find him watching me with an amused expression on his face. "Yeah, she must be great," he said.

"She is. Don't mess this up for me."

He chuckled. "As if I could. Does she know you're a god?"

"Yes. So she'll know you're one unless you want me to introduce you as something else."

"What do I care? I'm not the one dating her."

"Mmm."

The door opened, and Delia stepped inside with her coffees in one hand. "I'm sorry, I didn't realise you had company."

"It's okay, this is my uncle," I said, gesturing to the other man. "And this is Delia."

"It's good to meet you," she said, looking at him a little nervously. I didn't know whether that was because he was an imposing figure with his broad frame and dark red beard, or because she knew who he was.

"Likewise," Thor said. "I guess I should get going."

I nodded. "Let me know if you need any alterations, and I can get you sorted."

He waved and headed out of the room.

"I'm sorry," Delia said once he'd gone. "I didn't think that you might be busy."

"It's fine," I assured her, stepping closer and taking the drinks so they weren't in the way of me pulling her into my arms. "I'm glad to see you."

"Me too." She leaned in and pressed her lips against mine in a warm and welcoming kiss that just made me want more. But that was being around Delia. My wolf had calmed down a little since realising that I was pursuing her, but there was no doubt he still wanted me to take the next step.

"Thank you for the coffee," I said, though I didn't move away from her to get it.

"You're welcome." She put her hand on my chest. "The coffee wasn't the only reason I came."

"Oh?"

"Can we sit?"

I nodded and gestured to the sofas I had placed there as a kind of waiting room for when people needed it.

She grabbed her coffee and went to take a seat, leaving plenty of room for me to sit down beside her.

The scent of vanilla rose from my cup, filling me with warmth that she'd thought about what to get me.

"Is everything okay?" I asked her.

"Yes. It's fine. I actually just came from an interview at a local beauty school," she said. "After you asked me about why I'd never pursued it, I started thinking. And the more I did, the more I realised that not having time just wasn't enough of a reason not to do it. So I'm doing it."

"That's great," I said.

"Though it does mean that there'll be one day less a week that I'll be available for dates."

"I think I can survive," I promised. "That's really great that you're doing that."

"Thanks." She took a deep breath. "I'm excited. So thank you." She reached out to put her hand over mine.

"I didn't really do anything."

"True. But it was what you said that finally made me do something I've wanted for a

long time, so I appreciate that."

"Then you're welcome. I guess I do see that as my job as your fated mate."

She raised an eyebrow.

"To support you," I said. "And encourage you to be the person you want to be."

"I like that," she agreed. "I want you to feel that way too, though I know that I haven't really had many opportunities to show that to you yet."

"They'll come," I assured her.

"I'm sure they will."

"Speaking of dates. Are you free tomorrow night?" I asked.

"I am."

"And Monday?"

"I'm not. I'm going running." She paused for a moment, as if considering something important. "But you could come, if you wanted."

"I'm not much of a runner."

"A wolf run," she said softly.

"Oh." My inner wolf perked up at the idea. Not just of getting to spend time with her in our shifted forms, but about letting myself run free too. "Do you think that's a good idea?"

"It depends," she said. "You don't have to decide now, but if you think you're ready for us to move on to the next step of our mating bond, then I am too."

My surprise must have shown on my face because she laughed.

"Sorry, I shouldn't have sprung that on you."

"I just wasn't expecting it," I said. "It's not been that long."

"It's been a couple of weeks," she pointed out. "Longer by Monday. And I think that's a couple of weeks longer than I've left it every other time."

"Fair point."

She took a deep breath. "I guess I've been thinking about it ever since you stayed over last week.

I know that wasn't the right time for us to seal the mating bond, but we've been on a couple more dates, and can maybe go on a couple more this week.

So Monday...I guess it just feels like if we're ready, why wait? But I understand if you're not."

"I just don't want you to feel rushed," I said.

"I don't. And I feel like we've talked about a lot of the important stuff."

I nodded, realising that she was right. By denying the wolves for as long as we had, even if it wasn't a huge amount of time in the grand scheme of things, it had given us time to have conversations together.

But by virtue of knowing the bond was hanging over our heads, they were the more serious kind.

"All right, let's go for a run on Monday," I said. "But we should have dinner on Sunday to make sure that it's what we want. And dinner afterwards so that we can talk about it before we do anything about sealing the bond."

She let out a sigh of relief. "That sounds good."

"It does." I turned my hand over in hers and gave it a squeeze, feeling as if things were falling into place.

My wolf was certainly happy about the development.

I could feel him settling within my chest, content that things were going the way he wanted with the wolf he thought of as his match.

"Do you have anywhere else to be right now? " I asked her.

She shook her head. "Not until three."

"Want to go for lunch? Posiedon's restaurant isn't far from here, and it's great."

"Sure, that sounds great." She leaned in and kissed my cheek.

I turned, bringing our faces close together.

I reached out and cupped her cheek, drawing her to me and kissing her gently, hoping that it conveyed the feelings that were already starting to grow within me towards her.



There was no doubt in my mind that this mate bond had the potential to be a happy one, and I looked forward to discovering everything it had in store for us.

## Page 12

*Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 4:27 pm*

DELIA

A light breeze ruffled through my hair as I waited in the car park for Fenrir. Maybe we should have arrived together, but considering we were trying to make sure we weren't acting on something just because our wolves wanted it, I knew that it was better this way.

An electric car pulled into the car park, and he got out, his whole face lighting up when he saw me.

I made my way over, wrapping my arms around his neck and kissing him as if we'd been greeting one another for years and knew just what to do.

My wolf howled within me, desperate for me to let her be in control. It was only going to be a matter of time before she was, but that didn't stop me from needing her to cool it.

"Hey," I whispered against his lips.

"Hi," he responded.

"So, good news is that we're the only ones here." I gestured around at the general lack of cars.

"That does make shifting easier," he agreed.

"So, I'm going to go back over to my car and shift," I said. "You're welcome to look."

He laughed. "I'll be tempted to."

I kissed him again before making my way over, knowing that his gaze was on me the whole time. I'd worn a dress simply for how easy it was to take off in situations like this. While it was great that no one was here, I didn't know that until I'd arrived myself.

I locked gazes with Fenrir and pulled it over my head.

Maybe I shouldn't be teasing him before we let our wolves take over, but I was having too much fun seeing him react to me, and it only made me want to do it more.

I dropped my dress into the back of my car and kept eye contact as I stripped off my underwear, leaving me completely naked under his gaze.

A thrill travelled through me, especially because the expression on his face suggested that there was a part of him that wanted to come and take me up against the nearest tree.

I wouldn't say no.

But there were practical things to deal with first, and running off some of my wolf's energy was a must. I grabbed the leather pouch from the back of my car and hung it around my neck.

The cord felt too long in this form, but I knew it would be right when I shifted.

I locked my car and slipped the key into the pouch, leaning against the car to watch Fenrir undress.

I should feel exposed being here naked, but the company made it feel comfortable,

which was something I could get used to for future runs.

He put his car keys in a pouch of his own and sauntered over to me with the confidence of someone who knew how good he looked.

"Ready to run?" I asked him.

"Are you?" he responded.

I bit my lip and looked him up and down. "I'm ready for a lot of things."

A smile played at his lips, and he leaned in. "I'm sure you are. But later."

I swallowed hard and nodded, managing to get myself under control. I knew he meant it when he said that, and that tonight was going to be an important one for us, especially if neither of us had changed our minds after our conversation last night.

I knew that I hadn't.

The sound of another car approaching cut through our moment, and Fenrir pulled back. "Ready?" he asked.

"Yes."

I stepped away from him, making sure we both had enough space for the shift. I closed my eyes and tugged on the innate magic I'd been born with, transforming into a sleek grey wolf.

Fenrir had done the same, though his wolf was bigger than mine, with darker fur. I could see why the myths had called him a monster wolf, though it was just because of the power he clearly had, rather than anything sinister about his presence.

I moved forward and pushed my snout against his, feeling a thrill go through me when he nuzzled me back. I'd run with plenty of wolves, both people I thought were my mates, and those who weren't, but this already felt different.

He gestured with his head to the trees, and I made an approximation of a nod in return. Neither of us ran as we made our way from the car park to the treeline, wanting to be away from the car park before we did that.

My paws dug into the soft ground, testing how firm it was, while he did the same a few feet away.

Satisfied that it was safe to do so, I took off into the woods, my powerful legs carrying me with ease across the forest floor.

Wind ruffled through my fur, while birds sang in the trees, completely unaware of the predators that were running beneath them.

Then again, maybe they did know, and they knew that we weren't actually going to hurt them.

Fenrir kept pace with me easily, and I actually suspected that he might be holding back so that he didn't lose me. I wouldn't mind if he did. A run was supposed to be to let out the pent-up energy of having a wolf inside us.

Though I also liked the company. A warm feeling spread through me in response. If we did seal the mating bond later, then this kind of thing might become a regular occurrence for us. It would be nice to share my runs with someone, it made them all the more special.

I threw my head back and howled, letting my wolf run the show.

At moments like this, it truly felt like we were one, even if that wasn't always the case when I was in my human form.

I supposed that was just because we were at odds over some things.

When we were in agreement, I didn't feel nearly as much resistance from her.

Fenrir howled alongside me, our voices joining together as we looked up at the evening sky.

This was right. I'd already thought that while in my human form, but this was different. It was another level at which the two of us were matching, and I liked it just as much as my wolf did.

## Page 13

*Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 4:27 pm*

DELIA

I picked up my glass and took a sip of water, sneaking another look at Fenrir as I did. Except there wasn't a lot of sneaking going on when he caught me and smiled.

I burst out laughing. "I'm sorry, I feel like a teenager sneaking looks at you across the table."

He chuckled. "I know what you mean."

"I think it's just because of what tonight is," I said. "It feels like something big."

"It is," he pointed out. "Every wolf shifter hopes that the next time they seal a mating bond will be the last."

"Do you hope that?"

He met my gaze, an intensity lingering there that I didn't expect. "Yes."

I swallowed hard. "Even if I'm not immortal?"

"You haven't said that you're opposed to becoming immortal," he pointed out. "So yes, I hope that this is the last time I'm going to seal something like this."

"I think I'd be okay with being immortal," I said. "With the right person, anyway. But I don't have to decide now, right?"

"No. You've got time. As much as you want, really, within reason."

I nodded. "So maybe another ten years or so? I'll still look great then."

He laughed. "Is that your criteria for when to take immortality?"

"Well, yes. I don't want to spend eternity with bad knees. And how does it work for kids?" I asked.

"Kids?"

"Yes. If I want children, or if we want children, do I need to do that before I become immortal?"

"Not if you're turned immortal while you're still fertile."

"Ah, a downside to immortality, an eternity of periods," I muttered.

He chuckled. "I've heard some of the goddesses complain about that."

"Still worth it, I imagine. But that's also good. I don't even know if I want children, but there's something appealing about knowing I could have more time to decide that I do."

He nodded.

"Do you have any?" I asked curiously.

"No."

"Do you want them?"



"Maybe one day. When I grow up," he teased.

I laughed. "So in another eight hundred years?"

"I don't know," he answered honestly, leaning across the table so that he was closer to me. "I'm not against the idea of having children, I've just never been with someone whom I wanted to raise them with."

"Not even your previous fated mates?"

"They were a future thing for me and my first mate. My second mate didn't want them."

"Ah." I ran my fingers over my glass. "Kids aren't a deal breaker for me. I was actually starting to assume that I wouldn't have any at all."

"Are you okay with that?"

"Yes. I didn't think I would be in my early twenties, but it's one of those things that, as time passed, I realised I had lots of other things in my life that brought me joy. I do want a dog though."

"You've never had one?"

"Honestly, I've always felt bad about the idea of leaving a dog at home all day while I'm at work, so I've never gotten one," I admitted.

The waiter arrived with our starters and placed them down in front of us.

There was a part of me that wasn't sure whether we should have come for a formal meal out before the biting, but I knew that it was sensible to have something to slow

us down.

It meant that we could let our wolves calm down and make the decision based on what we want, rather than on what they demand of us.

I picked up one of my calamari rings and bit into it, not caring that I should really be using a knife and fork for it, given that we were in a nice restaurant. At least Fenrir didn't seem to care, and had picked up one of his ribs with his fingers too.

"So, you want a dog, but you're not sure about kids," he said. "What about travel?"

"What about it?"

"Is that something you want to do?"

I nodded. "I've been to a few places with my friends, but nowhere too exciting. I've never been to any of the Scandinavian countries, which I'm going to guess is a minus when dating a Norse god."

He chuckled. "It's also easily remedied."

"True. In all honesty, I like experiencing new places, but I hate staying away from home. I'd rather be comfortable in my own bed and then venture out for the day."

"Then you'll like the god realm," he said. "There's still a bit of travel involved, but there are portals connecting it to every country in the world. We can go on a day trip and then stop back at my house overnight."

"Your house?" I echoed.

"It's in the god realm," he said needlessly.

"I guessed. Am I allowed to go there?"

"Why wouldn't you be allowed in my house?" he asked.

"To the god realm," I corrected. "I'm not a god."

"Neither are a lot of people who go there. You need to be accompanied by a god, at least the first few times you go, but after that, you can go back and forth as you like. You just have to make sure you go through the right portal, because otherwise, you could end up halfway around the world."

"I think I'll stick with you until I get the hang of the portals," I joked.

"I can show you how to navigate them," he promised. "Maybe next week? My sister is having a birthday party at The Underworld ."

"I can't go to The Underworld , I'm not dead."

He chuckled. "Not the literal underworld, none of us can go there. It's a club run by Hades. I think he has one in the human realm now too."

A blush spread over my cheeks at such a rookie mistake. "I'm sorry, you must think that I'm an idiot."

"I really don't," he assured me. "The club is older than I am, and I made the mistake the first time Hel invited me there." From the expression on his face, I had to assume that he was telling the truth.

"That does make me feel a little better." I finished the last of my starter and pushed my plate away. "I'd like to go with you, if that's not going to be too soon for introducing me to your family."

He reached across the table and took my hand in his. "If we go ahead with the biting tonight, then you'll be my fated mate in every way. I don't think it's going to be too early to introduce you to my family."

My heart skipped a beat at the words. "I suppose I should probably call my parents and set up a dinner for you to meet them too. Though I think we should maybe avoid telling them that you're an eight-hundred-year-old god straight away. I'll find a good way to break that to them."

He laughed. "So you haven't been telling them that you've been hanging out around gods, then?"

"They know I've been using Jinx's dating services over the past couple of years, but I don't think it's fully sunk in that means that I've got the potential to match with a god.

There aren't really many wolf-shifting gods for them to want me to match with anyway.

What were the chances of the two of us meeting and being fated mates? "

"Quite high, apparently," he pointed out.

"Yes, it does seem that way. But I'm grateful that I got to meet you."

"What would you have done if we hadn't run into one another at the Horus Sanctuary party?" he asked.

"That's a good question. I suppose I'd have hoped that the effect you had over me would wear off, and if it didn't, I'd probably go to a few more Jinx events and hope that you'd be there. Which isn't necessarily the best way to deal with it."

"It's probably what I'd have done," he admitted. "It's been a while since my wolf responded to anyone."

"Why me?"

"Why not you? I'm just a person, Delia."

"A person who has been worshipped."

"I know it seems like that somehow makes me special, but it's no more so than the thousands of other gods who exist in the world."

"I don't have much more magic than you do as a wolf shifter, and the same is true for the other gods."

"Hel is just a necromancer, she doesn't actually have anything to do with the dead."

"I thought she was your sister?"

"She is. We have different mothers, so we got different magic. Just like it works with non-god beings."

"Ah."

The waiter appeared to take our plates away. We broke apart, leaving me feeling disappointed at the lack of connection.

"Can we get dessert to go?" I asked.

He raised an eyebrow.

"For after." I bit my lip and looked at him so he knew exactly why I wanted to do that. As much as it was nice to be out with him, there was a part of me that was yearning to seal the bond between us. The longer I spent with him, the more certain I was that it was what I wanted.

And I didn't want to waste a moment getting to the next stage.

*Source Creation Date: August 4, 2025, 4:27 pm*

DELIA

My hands were shaking with anticipation as I unlocked my flat door and let us inside.

All I'd been able to think about through our main course was this moment, and what it would be like to seal the mating bond between us.

I knew none wolf shifters might think that it was too early for us to be doing this, and they were probably right about that.

But considering the response of our inner wolves to one another, it was a miracle we hadn't done this sooner, especially after we'd spent a couple of nights together.

I put the bag with our desserts in it on the kitchen table along with my handbag, fully intending to come back and get them afterwards.

"Last chance to back out," I said to Fenrir.

"Not happening," he responded, reaching for me and pulling me close. "If you want this, then I do too."

"I want this," I whispered.

"Okay."

I took his hand and drew him into the bedroom, feeling both more and less frenzied than the first time we'd done this.

There was a part of me that was desperate to feel his hands on my body again, but I also didn't want to rush anything, not when this was a night we would want to remember for the rest of our lives.

Fenrir leaned in and captured my lips in his, a tender kiss that was full of the promise of what this bond could be.

I broke the kiss and looked up to meet his gaze. "I want this," I whispered.

"Me too," he responded.

"Good." I touched his cheek and stepped back, allowing me to have some space to get undressed. My wolf was behaving within me, no doubt because she knew she was about to get what she wanted.

He laid me back on the bed and kissed my throat, making my pulse race and the hope bloom up within me that he was about to bite. But he had other ideas, and continued his path lower, grazing his teeth over my nipples and sending shoots of pleasure straight between my legs.

I parted them, knowing what he was planning on doing, and even if it was going to delay the bite that I wanted, I wasn't about to pass up on the pleasure he could bring me.

His breath fanned against my centre, and I let out a moan, which only urged him on. Slowly, he started tracing his tongue over my most sensitive spot, causing the pleasure to curl up within me. It hadn't taken him very long to learn all of the best ways to get my pleasure going.

I reached down and threaded my fingers through his hair, urging him to continue. He hooked his arms under my legs and drew me closer, the new angle making me cry



out. If he kept going like that, then I was going to...

A loud moan escaped from me as the pleasure took over and my whole body began to shake. He didn't stop paying me attention, prolonging the release until I was spent.

He looked up, meeting my gaze with a knowing grin written all over his face. "I'm never going to get tired of seeing you respond like that."

"Mmm." It was the only thing that I was able to formulate at this moment. "I can do...for you."

He chuckled. "Later." He reached out to the bedside table and helped himself to a condom. "Right now, I want to be inside you."

My breath caught in my throat. "And?"

"To bite you." He leaned back against the headboard and gestured for me to join him.

Anticipation grew within me at the thought of what was about to happen. None of my past fated mates had a biting like this with me. They'd all been spur-of-the-moment, not thought through at all. This was different. It was planned, and something I'd been thinking about and anticipating all day.

Even though Fenrir wasn't touching me yet, I felt the pleasure start to build again. The anticipation was just making it too much to ignore.

I straddled his hips, lowering myself onto him and moaning as he filled me. I cupped his face in my hand and looked down at him, our lips barely an inch apart. I could feel the rise and fall of his chest beneath me, and it only made me want this more.

"Mine," he growled against my lips. His gaze burned into me, heating every part of

me in a way I hadn't experienced before. Not even from the others I'd thought could be my fated mate. I wasn't sure what about this time was different, but it certainly felt it.

"Yes," I whispered in response, the word coming from me before I could even consider whether it was a good idea. But of course it was. Maybe I wasn't thinking about it in this moment, but I'd been thinking about it all day.

I kissed him deeply, rocking myself back and forth until it became harder for me to concentrate on both activities at once. I broke the kiss, and he used the gesture to move to my neck. His teeth grazed against my skin, only heightening my senses as they broke the skin.

My wolf howled within me, becoming one with me in a way that normally only happened when I was shifted. This was only half of the process, but it was a good step towards what I wanted.

He removed his teeth, his breath already coming ragged. "Bite me, Delia," he said through bated breath. "Seal it."

I nodded, leaning in and trying to focus enough to do what I needed to.

Except that I didn't need to. I could let my instincts take over and my wolf could do this part.

I gave over to her, allowing her to drive my movements as I found Fenrir's neck.

His movements were already starting to become erratic beneath me.

My teeth elongated in my mouth, becoming the fangs I was used to in my wolf form, but not this one. The mating bite was the only time I ever partially shifted, though I'd

never really tried anything else.

I sunk my teeth into his neck, giving myself over to the magic of the bond. It spread through me like warmth, pushing me over the edge of my pleasure. Judging from the way Fenrir responded beneath me, the same was true for him.

Every inch of me felt like it was on fire in the best way, and I could feel every touch of Fenrir's like it was amplified by a thousand.

There was no stopping the intensity of the release, or the way it felt to give over to it.

My mind went black and it was as if I could see stars dancing around my head as it ended, and I leaned forward to collapse against Fenrir, leaning my head against his shoulder and breathing heavily.

"Mine," I murmured against his chest, the word half coming from me, and half from my wolf.

"Yours," he promised, leaning in and kissing my head.

I nuzzled further into his chest, enjoying the warmth of his arms around me and safe in the knowledge that this was a familiar place. One that could become so much more.

It could be home.

### FENRIR

The portal to the god realm tingled as I passed through it, and I immediately looked over to Delia to see how she was holding up when it came to passing through. It had been a long time since I'd first encountered the portals, but I'd heard from a lot of people that the first time could be rough.

"Give me a moment," she murmured, leaning against a nearby wall. "Oof, that wasn't fun."

"It gets easier," I promised.

She nodded, some of the colour returning to her face. "Maybe I should have suggested we come earlier so that I'm not going to meet your sister while portal sick."

"It will have worn off by the time we get to the club," I promised. "And we can stay in my house tonight if you're not ready to go through again."

"I want to stay at your house so that I can see what it's like," she responded. "You're always at mine."

I flashed her a smile, glad that she already seemed brighter. I hated the idea that anything was making her uncomfortable, even if there was no way of getting around that.

She straightened up and brushed off her dress, her eyes widening as she took in the god realm. "Wow."

I chuckled. "Not what you were expecting?"

"It's exactly what I was expecting," she responded as she looked around. "It's such a mish-mash of cultures."

"That's because all gods and immortals have access to the god realm, and time doesn't really mean much here." I offered her my arm and she took it. "There's a lake on the other side where we sometimes have boat races."

"In the same kind of boats, or different ones?"

"Different," I responded. "Everyone has their own preferences. The only rule is that motorboats are banned. It has to be something you can either row or sail."

"Amazing."

"It's fun. Maybe you can join me sometime."

"I'd like that." She smiled at me in a way that lit up her whole face.

"There's great food here too," I responded. "Just about any cuisine you want."

"I can see that we're going to have a lot of fun staying at your place," she said.

"I'd like to think so," I agreed.

"But where's The Underworld ?"

"There." I pointed to the large building in front of us. "Thankfully, the portal closest to you is also the one nearest to the club."

She nodded. "I'm not sure what to expect."

"Pretty much the same as you'd get in an upscale club in the human realm," I assured her. "Just full of gods and immortals. Well, and a few other guests."

"Right, yes." She swallowed hard. "And your sister."

"You're going to love her."

"I hope you're right."

I wanted to reassure her more, but I knew that wasn't going to be possible until she was in front of Hel and getting along well with her.

"Did you introduce your previous fated mates to Hel?" she asked.

"I did," I responded. "She met several of the failed bonds too."

"Right, so I'm not the first. I don't know if that adds pressure, or if it takes it away."

I stopped us from walking and turned to face her, cupping her cheek in my hand and meeting her gaze. "She's going to love you, Delia," I promised. "You're my fated mate, which means that we've got what it takes to fit together perfectly. That includes getting on with one another's families."

"I suppose so, I'm just feeling the pressure. You're a god."

"I'm your mate, first and foremost," I reminded her. A thrill went through me as I said it. This beautiful woman was mine, and I was hers. It would take more than that for our relationship to last, but the foundations were there, thanks to the wolves we shared within us.

She touched her hand to my chest, and I put mine over hers. "You really believe that?"

"You know I do," I promised.

She nodded. "Okay, let's go."

"There's just one thing to do first," I responded.

"Oh?"

I leaned in and brushed my lips against hers, kissing her softly. I wanted her to know that I was there for her, and that I thought this could last. Fate might have decided to bring us together, but we were what was going to keep us that way.

We broke apart, and she smiled at me. "Now I'm really ready."

"Good. Because we're basically here." I waved towards the door at the end of the street with a bouncer outside it. I wasn't really sure who Hades got to work for him here in the god realm, but there were probably always people looking for a job.

The man nodded his head at me, not bothering to check my name against the guest list. There was really no need to when most of the people around knew who I was.

Music spilt out of several of the rooms even as we made our way inside. It wasn't as loud as in some of the clubs in the human realm, but it was familiar, and I could sense Delia relax a little more to be somewhere that felt familiar.

People were everywhere, and I nodded to those I knew well, but didn't stop. That could come later. I led her upstairs, knowing that was where Hel was likely to be, and as if to prove my point, we headed into the bar there to find Thor in front of us.

"Delia, good to see you again," my uncle said with a wide smile to my mate.

"You too, Thor." There was a slight hesitation as she said his name, but it seemed to

fade when she realised that he wasn't about to get angry at her for using his name.

"Nephew," Thor said to me.

"Uncle," I responded. "Do you know where Hel is?"

"VIP section," he said. "Where else?"

I laughed. "Fair enough."

He waved goodbye and headed over to where a red-headed woman was waiting at the bar.

Delia leaned into me, making my wolf respond. I liked the fact that she was clearly seeking me out for comfort. I reached out for her hand, giving it what I hoped was a reassuring squeeze. I didn't want her to feel out of sorts by being here.

The VIP section looked exactly like I remembered it, with my sister sitting in the middle of several other gods. I raised my hand to wave to her, making Hel jump to her feet and hurry over. At least my sister was excited to meet my mate.

"You came," she said.

"I said I would."

"You might have decided that your mate was better company than your sister," Hel responded.

"She is."

"You insult me. And on my birthday."



I rolled my eyes. "This is my mate, Delia," I said, gesturing to the blonde woman beside me.

"Hi." She gave Hel a nervous wave.

"This is Hel," I said. "Her words might bite, but she doesn't."

Hel snorted. "That's what you think."

I grimaced while Delia hid her laugh behind her hand. "I don't want to know."

"You brought it up," Delia teased me.

"Oh, I like her. Your wolf has good taste," Hel said to me.

"Hey, what about me?"

She shrugged. "Debateable. Now I'm going to get a drink.

You should join us. Maybe then we can talk about how you and Delia met, rather than hear Persephone waxing lyrical about Hades now they're back together.

I think I preferred them broken up after all.

" She didn't wait for me to respond and headed out to the bar.

"I'm sorry about her," I said to Delia.

"Don't be, she seems nice."

"Mmm."

"And I think you have great taste," she assured me, wrapping her arms around my neck. "It's your wolf's taste that's questionable."

I chuckled. "Hardly. He noticed you."

She beamed at me, making my heart squeeze in response. "I'm glad I met you."

"Me too. And not just because you make my wolf happy."

"No, not just because of that." She leaned in and pressed a kiss against my lips, making me certain that my wolf had chosen right when he'd decided that she was my fated mate.

And that I was going to enjoy every moment of my life to come with her, knowing that we were a good fit, and making sure we stayed that way.

Thank you so much for reading Mated to Fenrir , I hope you enjoyed it!