

## Alpha Niall And His Lost Mate Chapter 26

Niall's Pov

I knew what I had to do, and I wasn't going to let my mate fall asleep without me.

Valero gave me an encouraging smile as I got up and brushed the dirt from my jeans. I sat beside her at the bank of the river, but she didn't look at me once or acknowledge my presence.

Sighing, I scooted a little closer to her, keeping just enough distance as not to startle her. From what I've witnessed growing up, women are very snappy when they are angry, frustrated or sad, and I didn't even know which one Zoey was feeling—maybe all.

"Why did you leave Niall?" I was shocked to hear her small sweet voice asking me the question. I was still recovering from the shock that she actually spoke to me, that I took a while to answer her question.

"I-um..I came here to try and get more information about where your dad might've been from" I told her truthfully, totally unaware of how she would take it.

She removed her chin from the gap between her knees and her chest as she peered at me. She wasn't saying anything, and her face and eyes didn't give away anything either. It made me anxious to know what was going on in that beautiful mind of hers.

"Please say something Zoey" I sighed, feeling desperate for some sort of emotion from her.

"What am I supposed to say Niall? Thank you? I'm flattered?" Her tone caught me by surprise, and it killed me even more that she was this upset with me. "You could've told me Niall! You SHOULD'VE told me!"

It was then that I saw how much I really hurt her, but it was never my intention to do so. After I arrived, I learnt that they didn't know anything about him. I knew it was a long shot, so I decided to just leave right away without looking back. But when I was about to leave that same day, the mask I used to hide my scent wore off, and they all got so defensive after knowing an Alpha was in their territory.

I had no intention to fight them, so I let them know that I came in peace for simple information to help my mate. Of course, that was a mistake. They knew they could use her against me, and even with my strength and speed, I couldn't fight the whole Rogue Burg population, neither did I intend to.

So, I did a simple favour that they asked so that I didn't get caught up in a rogue war—especially against my Zoey. It took longer than I expected, so I decided to leave without

helping them finish what they asked me to do, but somehow, someone knew who I was, meaning they knew my pack and knew my Zoey.

My border patrol was one of the strongest in the country, but I performed treason going on their property, and when I didn't want to hold up on my end or the bargain, that could potentially mean war that I was not ready for, nor intended for my mate to be caught in.

I guess that's when she felt my panic, and it never eased until I completed the favour for them. I should've considered that it would've led her to me, thinking I was in trouble.

When I felt her close, I panicked again as I didn't want her anywhere near that place. If only she had waited a little longer for me to reach the border like I asked, and we'd all go home safe.

But I wouldn't dare try blaming this on her. She was a worried wolf for her mate... I should've known not to try and get her to turn back. Now, her friend is dead and it was all because I didn't tell her that I was leaving.

"I know" I held my head down, too ashamed to look her in the eyes." I didn't want to tell you and have your hopes, only to have them crushed if I didn't learn anything. It wasn't supposed to last this long but they figured out that I wasn't a rogue and I might've mentioned that I just wanted information to help my mate and they threatened to go after you, so to show them that I had no intention of war, I-

"It doesn't matter Niall" She mumbled without looking at me."It doesn't matter anymore...Did you, did you learn anything?" She met my eyes again, but I couldn't even hold on to that small hint of light in her eyes, since I had no good news to relay to her.

She sighed and buried her head in her knees again after I shook my head. I wanted to hold her, I wanted to hold her so bad. But if I should so much as reach out for her, she would hiss at me like a kitten.

"Zoey I'm so, so sorry. I know now that I should've never done something this big without informing you. In my mind, I was just trying to do what's best for you. I wanted to protect you, and I thought that if I told you, you would've asked to come with me. When I didn't come home, it was all because I didn't want to put you in harm's way. I didn't want to tell you what my aim was, because I didn't want to see that disappointed look that you have right now. I just want you to be happy, that's all I ever wanted. It's why I do such preposterous things sometimes even if you don't understand. Just... Just know I did it all for you."

When she didn't answer, I continued after letting out a deep sigh.

"I don't know, and won't even try to understand the connection you had to the rog- I mean, Clarissa. But I am so deeply sorry for being the reason why she um-died" I

perked up when she actually turned to look at me again. But my heart broke when I saw her eyes swimming with sadness.

“It wasn’t your fault. I blame myself for bringing her along. I could’ve killed Valero too. If only I listened to Asia and believe that you could take care of yourself.”

“Hey hey baby don’t do that to yourself” I didn’t yield to her protest anymore. I just knew I had to hold her in my arms to show her that I was there. “I know this is hard and you have every right to be upset with me. But this is not your fault Zoey. We are wolves. Our instincts are our sole driver of life next to love. Imagine having both instincts and love forcing you to go after your mate that you believed was in trouble? You didn’t do anything wrong, and I know Clarissa knows that. If anyone is to blame here, it’s me okay? Don’t blame yourself for caring”

Her shoulders shook as she cried in my chest, causing my insides to plummet in grief, guilt and shame. All I ever wanted to do was make her happy. Now, I was the sole cause of her being so broken. It tore me apart.

It all became so much worse when she let her walls down. If I thought she was hurting before, I didn’t know how to describe it now.

I felt a tear roll down my cheek as her tears soaked my bare chest. I didn’t know what to say to her, nor did I know what to do. But I did know that even if I was her least favourite person in the world at that moment, I had to be there for her.

And so, I tried to be strong as I let down my own walls and flooded her with all the love, care, adoration and warmth I could muster, just to show her that she meant the world to me.

She wrapped her arms around me tighter as I whispered sweet nothings and apologies in her ear, and rubbed small circles on her arm. It took a while for her to settle down, but I never tried to stop her. She shuffled so that I was cradling her to my chest.

“I’m b-broken Niall” Her small, sweet voice broke me from my thoughts as her emotions continued to subside. “I always have been, but I never tried to acknowledge it. I just always accepted that people die and life moves on.” She hiccuped over a lingering sob as she continued.

I listened attentively, knowing she didn’t need me to butt in, but simply listened.

“I accepted that I didn’t know my dad. I accepted that my mom was sickly and I accepted that maybe I am a high ranking wolf. Even when I didn’t shift at 16 like normal wolves, I accepted that I was different. But the load of all that acceptance crumbled my foundation and I didn’t even notice until now.” She gazed up at me, as if checking if I was still listening before bringing her hand to her mouth as she yawned.

"I've-I've always looked on the positive side of things. But after seeing Clarissa sail away on that thing, I couldn't get her words out of my head, telling me to go to Emerald Pack and learn the complete truth. But how much more accepting can I bear Niall? What if what I learn isn't what I want to know? What if it breaks me even more than helps me find out who I really am? Clarissa told me that when I learn everything, I'd have to make decision that I might not like—that you might not like"

She shook her head twice, and it looked like she was on the brink of crying again, so I quickly rubbed her arm soothingly, providing as much comfort as possible.

"I can't do this Niall." She mumbled, sounding very much sleepy. "I can't do this over and over again. I'm not going. I don't need to know anything more. All I need to know is that I can find happiness here with you. I always thought that once I learn everything, I'd be able to move on completely and be the best mate and Luna for you... But don't you see Niall? I don't need that. I only need you and I'll be happy. I'm not going" She concluded firmly but quietly as her body grew heavier, showing me that she was falling asleep.

I was left stunned into silence as I watched her sleepy and sad eyes droop. I gently placed a kiss on her forehead before laying her beside me on the ground as she welcomed sleep. I laid beside her and pulled her to my chest again. I saw that Valero was also sleeping, leaving me alone to my thoughts.

I didn't even know that Clarissa told Zoey that her answers were at Emerald Pack in England. In fact, I had no idea what she already knew after picking the rogue's brain.

But how do I tell my mate, who just cried her heart and soul out in my arms, simply because she had to accept painful truth after truth all her life, that she needed to go and accept just this one more, despite the risks?