

## :::::Chapter 20:::::

"Is the truth really that bad that you need to lie?" Matt asks me. ୧

I sigh. I decide to tell him the truth because he's my friend and I don't think I'll be able to lie to him. "Today, Alarick called me an impostor." ୧୧

"What!" He exclaims in shock. "How could he! You're his mate!"

"He doesn't think so," I say.

"If he doesn't respect you, then why are you even staying here? Come with me back to our pack." ୧୨

"I knew you would say that. That's the reason why I didn't want to tell you the truth in the first place."

Matt stands up and says, "Alarick doesn't deserve you! Come with me. He'll only realize what he has lost when you're gone." ୧୩

"Matt, I have made up my mind. I'm not going to return to my pack until and unless I know why Alarick is denying me," I say. ୧୩୩

"When will he tell you the reason?"

"He won't tell me. I'll have to find out myself." ୧୪

"How long will it take for you to find out?"

"I don't know." ୧୪

Matt sits beside me again. "Chriselda, Joshua is conspiring something against you. If you don't return to our pack within a few days then I'm afraid that he'll do something drastic," he says, trying to make me understand. ୧୫

"Is there any time when Joshua isn't conspiring against me?" I ask sarcastically.

"Chriselda, I'm serious!"

"Why are you?" I ask. "It's just Joshua," I say coolly. "There's nothing to worry about." ୧୬

"You're not realizing that Joshua is a potential threat."

"Threat?" I ask, humor evident in my voice. ୧୬

"He can be a threat to your position and also to our pack," he answers seriously. "If he becomes the Beta of our pack then all hell will break loose."

"He will not become the Beta," I assure Matt. ୧୬

"How can you be so sure about that?" He asks. ୧୬

I place my hands on his shoulders and say, "Because you won't let him."

"I don't want him to become my Beta but what if he makes the majority of people side along with him? Then, I'll have to take people's consideration into account." ୧୭

"If that happens then I'm going to make sure that Joshua doesn't become your Beta," I say confidently. ୧୭

"How are you going to do that?" He asks.

"You will come to know when the time is right," I say. "Now, I don't want to talk about my greedy cousin anymore. Let's talk about someone else." ୧୭

"Like who?" Matt asks.

"Like..." I pretend to think for a while and then say, "...Anne." ୧୮

His ears stand in attention at the mention of his mate. He seems interested and excited now. "What about her?" He asks, trying to make it less obvious by toning down his excitement level. ୧୮

I bring my lips near his ear and whisper, "I know she's your mate." ୧୮

He is taken aback by my words. He is shocked but then soon recovers. He gives out a nervous laugh and says, "She's not my mate." ୧୮

"Matt, you're my friend. I know when you lie and I can tell that you are lying right now," I tell him.

"Okay," he says as he nods his head. "How did you know?"

"The emotions on your face gave it away," I tell him.

"Were my emotions too obvious?"

"No but since I happen to be a very good friend of yours, I was able to see through your facade the emotions you felt for your mate," I explain. ୧୯

"Oh," he says.

"So, why didn't you do the typical?" I am quick to ask him.

"Typical?" He asks confusingly.

"You know, taking your mate in your arms and proclaiming that she is yours," I explain. ୧୯

He chuckles and then explains, "When I came here to meet you, I didn't know that I would end up finding my mate. It was so unexpected. When I looked at Anne, I was so happy but then I realized that she's a minor. And that's the reason why I didn't do the typical" ୧୯

"When are you planning on telling her that you both are mates?" I question.

"I'll probably wait until she's eighteen," he answers. ୧୯

I'm amused by his answer. "Will you be able to wait for two years to tell her?" ୧୯

He thinks for a while and then answers, "It will be hard for me but I think I'll survive." I nod. "Chris, since I don't know anything about my mate, can you tell me something about her?" He asks. ୧୯

"There's one thing you should know about Anne," I say seriously.

"What?" He asks, concerned.

"That she's crazy!" I tell him. ୧୯

"Don't call my mate crazy," he says a little defensively. ୧୯

"You have no idea what Anne did to me yesterday."

"What did she do?"

"She had this crazy theory that if Alarick would mark me then he would go so on me. So yesterday, she had stolen my clothes thinking that when her brother would see me naked, he would mark me. But nothing like that happened. Her plan backfired," I tell him.

"When you say naked, do you mean stark naked?" He asks for clarification. ୧୯

"I had a towel wrapped around my body," I inform him. ୧୯

"If Alarick would've seen you stark naked, then he would have definitely marked you." ୧୯

"Matt, don't try to justify Anne's actions." ୧୯

"It's obvious for me to justify her actions because she happens to be my mate." ୧୯

"So, you mean to say that stealing a person's clothes is justified?" I ask.

"I think it was justified on her part since she had stolen your clothes just so that she could bring you and Alarick close." I look at him for a while. "Why are you looking at me like that?" He asks. ୧୯

I say, "It's good to know that you're defending your mate. Anne is a lucky girl to have a mate like you." I try to smile at him but somehow I can't bring myself to do that. I'm a little jealous of Anne. She ended up with such a good mate but I ended up with a mate who hates me. Life has always been unfair to me. First, it was my Dad who was killed in the Silver Moonstone battle. Then, I had to deal with my cousin brother who was greedy for power. And then, I ended up being with a cold-hearted mate. Sometimes I wish that there would be no mates, that werewolves had the freedom to choose the person whom they want to spend their life with. ୧୯

But Goddess of Wolves had to ruin things. She had to make a mate for every wolf! I wish that werewolves could fall in love just like humans do! ୧୯

I break away from my train of thoughts when I feel Matt's hand on my shoulder as a gesture of solace.

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"Bye Chriselda. Take care," Mom says as she pulls away from the embrace. We are currently standing in the living room and it's time for Mom, Christina and Matt to return to their pack. A er Mom, Christina hugs me. Her tiny arms encircle my waist. "Bye," she says. ୧୯

"Bye," I reply.

"I'll miss you."

"I'll miss you too."

We pull apart from our hug and Matt steps forward to hug me. Then he pulls away.

"Try to return back as soon as possible." He says using mind-link. nod. ୧୯

He along with Mom and Christina leave the pack house. I find Anne standing at the closed front door. I wave my hand in her face to bring her back to reality. She looks at me and asks, "What?" ୧୯

"Why were you staring at the door?" I ask.

"Just like that," she replies. "By the way, you didn't tell that your pack is led by a hot Alpha." ୧୯

I roll my eyes. She'll obviously find Matt hot because he's her mate.

"Well, now you know," I reply.

"I wish I could see him shirtless," she mumbles to herself as she sighs dreamily. I can't help but smile and shake my head at her. ୧୯

"It's wrong for you to even think of some man shirtless other than your mate," Daniel says to her. ୧୯

"I can't help but imagine him shirtless," she says honestly. "I think I have a crush on him," she later adds. I chuckle. The fact that she has a crush on her mate is pretty amusing to me. I really want her to turn eighteen as soon as possible because I want to see the priceless expression on her face when she comes to know that her crush is her mate. ୧୯

Charles puts his arm around her shoulder and says to her, "Your crush will fade away when you'll come across your mate." I highly doubt that. I sit on the sofa and others follow my lead. The memories of last night start playing in my head as Alarick's words echo in my ears.

"Anne, I know why you came to live with us in pack house. I know that Dad sent you to keep an eye on me and Chriselda. I know he sent you to make sure that I don't kick her out of the pack house. I know he sent you so that you both can conspire how you can bring me and Chriselda close! Am I right?!"

I turn to Anne and say, "I need you to tell me the truth." She gives me a confused look. "Anne, I'm going to ask you a question and I want you to answer it by either saying yes or no," I tell her. "I don't want any explanations, okay?" She carefully nods. "Did your father really send you here to live with us so that you can bring Alarick and I close?" I ask her.

"Chriselda, you need to understand that—" She starts to say but I interrupt her.

"I don't want any explanations, Anne," I remind her. "Just answer by saying either yes or no."

She takes a deep breath and then answers, "Yes."

I stand up on my feet. "Anne, take me to your father," I tell her. "I need to talk to him." ୧୯

"Are you angry at him for sending me here to live with you all?" She asks.

"Yes, I'm little angry at him," I tell her. "He sent you here to make me and his son close. He needs to know that his involvement is making matters worse than they already are. Did you tell him all the things Alarick said to you last night?"

"No," Anne replies.

"Then, I'm going to tell him." ୧୯

"Please, don't," she says pleadingly. "Dad will be worried if he comes to know all the things that Alarick said to me."

"Anne, there's no point in hiding things because your father will eventually come to know everything," I explain to her. "Now, please take me to your father," I request her. She gets up reluctantly and leads me to her father's house. I wouldn't have bothered her if I knew the location of Mr. West's house. On our way, we remain silent. I don't know what Anne is thinking but I'm thinking of all the things that I would say to Mr. West.

When we reach his house, Anne knocks at the front door and Mrs. West answers. She looks worried when her gaze falls on me. Before I can ask her why she is worried, a familiar scent hits my nostrils. If I'm not mistaken, the scent belongs to Alarick. But why would he be here? ୧୯

Soon, my doubt is confirmed when I hear him shouting at his father from one of the rooms in the house. ୧୯

**Author's Note: This story got ranked at #338 in the Werewolf category and at #734 in the Romance category. :)** ୧୯