

Chapter 23

Author's Note: Happy New Year!!! I just want to thank all the people who have been supporting this story by voting and commenting. It means a lot to me! I love you guys! :) It makes me so happy to see people voting on every chapter! :)

I hope all of you have a blessed year ahead!

"You said that you won't return until and unless you know why your mate is denying you. And you have returned within a week. So, should I take this as a sign that you finally know the reason why your mate is denying you?" She asks.

I look away from her and without feeling any emotions, I say, "I don't have a mate."

"But Alarick West-" I interrupt Mom.

"Who is Alarick West? I don't know any person who goes by that name."

"Chriselda, why are you saying that?" She asks feeling worried for me.

"Mom, I don't want to talk about it!" I say to end the conversation. I don't want to talk about Alarick West. I want to forget about him.

I stand up and I'm ready to leave the room but Mom grabs my arm. "Chriselda, talk to me. Baby, I'm worried. Please tell me what happened," she requests. I make a mistake of looking at her face. I shouldn't have looked at her. My Mom looks so worried due to my unexpected behavior.

I take a deep breath and sit back on the bed. I start telling her, "Today, I asked my so-called mate the reason why he's denying me. And he told me that he doesn't want a mate."

"Why doesn't he want a mate?"

"He doesn't wants a mate because he just doesn't wants a mate!"

"But-" Mom starts saying but I interrupt her again.

"Mom, you asked me what happened and I told you. Now, I don't want to talk about it anymore!" I snatch my arm from her grip and leave her room, joining Christina in the living room. We both peacefully watch the Disney movie.

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Just as the end credits of the movie starts rolling, there's a knock at the front door. When I go and answer the door, I am immediately enveloped in a hug by Matthew and Darius, my two dear friends.

When we all three pull away, Matt asks me, "Why didn't you straightaway come to the pack house?"

"I wanted to meet Christina," I reply. "By the way, how did you know that I was at my house?"

"The word spread in the pack that you have returned and we knew that if you didn't come to the pack house then you would probably be at your house or at Ciara's," Darius answers.

"Smarty pants," I playfully say.

"That I am," he replies. And we both start laughing. It feels like a reunion. I am happy to be back.

"So, when are you coming to the pack house?" Matt asks. Before I can open my mouth to speak, he says, "You can stay at your house for today if you want."

"If I stay the night here then it will be very difficult for me to say goodbye to Christina and come to the pack house tomorrow," I say. "So, I'll be coming with you guys now."

"Okay," Matt says.

I get inside the house and pick up my backpack from the sofa. "Mom, I'm going to the pack house!" I announce to Mom who hasn't come out of her room since we had the conversation and I don't think she would come out of her room now.

"But you came just now," Christina complains. "And you're going so soon."

I bend a little to cup her little face. "I know but you also know that I have to return to the pack house since I'm the Beta of this pack. And you can visit me any time, you know." She nods her head. She hugs my waist. I hug her and kiss the top of her head. We pull away and Matt, Darius and I leave my house and head towards the pack house.

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After keeping my backpack in my room, I join Matt and Darius in the living room. "You said that you won't return until you know the reason why Alarick is denying you and you have returned today. So, do you finally know the reason why he is denying you?" Matt asks.

I took a deep breath and say, "Firstly, I don't want to hear his name ever again because hearing his name boils my blood. And secondly, I asked him the reason why he's denying me and he told me that he doesn't want a mate."

"But why doesn't he want a mate?" He questions.

"Because he just doesn't!" I say. I'm tired of giving answer to the same question.

"Don't you want to know the reason?"

I shake my head and say, "No. I don't want to know. What I want is to forget about him. I want to forget that he even exists!"

"That may not be possible since he happens to be the Alpha of our neighboring pack," Darius speaks for the first time.

I give him the "look." "Darius, your words are not helping," I tell him.

"Sorry," he quickly apologizes.

"Let's forget that this conversation ever happened," I say to both Matt and Darius.

"Actually," Darius says uncertainly, "I want to talk about something."

"About what?" I ask.

"About why Alar-your mate is denying you," he quickly corrects himself.

"What do you want to say about that?"

"A thought came to my mind. Maybe something might have happened in his past and because of that reason he doesn't want a mate," he suggests.

"What would've happened in his past? It's not like some girl broke his heart or something that he doesn't want a mate," I say sarcastically.

"Maybe that's the reason," he says with a serious face.

"My so-called mate doesn't have a heart. He has a stone instead of a heart," I tell him. "And anyway, your theory is illogical. We, wolfs, are supposed to fall in love with our mate. We don't have a choice of falling in love with someone else. Even if we try, we won't be able to fall in love with someone who isn't our mate."

Darius doesn't say anything. But Matt does. "Didn't you try to find out about Alarick's past?" He asks me.

"I tried but everyone whom I asked told me that they are not the right people to tell me about his past," I answer.

"Did you ask him about his past?"

"He doesn't used to even remain in the same room as me so how the hell was I supposed to ask him about his past?" I ask. Both remain silent for a long time. "Let's end this conversation," I say. They nod their heads in agreement.

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In the evening, there's a knock at the front door. Darius gets up to answer the door. Before he can open the door, I say to him, "If it's Mr. West then tell him that I'm not here."

"Why?" He questions.

"For now, do as I say. I'll explain later," I reply and go to my room to hide from Mr. West. I don't want to see the look of disappointment on his face due to my early departure from his pack.

I hear the front door opening.

"Hello, Gamma Darius," I hear my Mom greet Darius. What is Mom doing here?

"Hello, Mrs. Turner. Please come in," Darius invites her inside the pack house.

"I just came here to talk to Chriselda. Where is she?"

"She's in her room."

"I'll go and meet her," Mom says and soon, I hear her footsteps before there's a knock at my bedroom door. "Chriselda?" She calls my name. I open the door for her and let her in. "I'm sorry for not coming out of my room when you were leaving the house," she apologizes.

"It's okay," I say.

"You know, I was thinking about some things," She starts to say, "I know I said to you to return to our pack if your mate doesn't respect you and you returned. But I have just got a question to ask you. Will you be able to live without your mate?"

"Mom, I don't know about that but I just know that I won't be able to live with a person who doesn't want me. I'm so much better off without my mate," I say.

"I don't want you to be miserable without him," she says.

"Mom, I will be miserable if I'm with him!" I tell her.

"Are you sure about that?"

"Yes! I can live without my mate! You've been doing that for six years and I don't find you miserable without your mate!"

"I have been miserable since your Dad died okay!" Mom's voice becomes loud all of a sudden as tears fill her eyes, threatening to escape any minute now. "I have been pretending to be alright ever since because I had two daughters to raise on my own! Everyone thinks that I have coped with your father's death but the truth is that I am still miserable without him!" Mom starts crying. I think I went too far. I shouldn't have mentioned Dad in this situation. She continues,

"I am miserable without my mate and I don't want you to be miserable without yours! I care about you, Chriselda. I want you to be happy, not to be miserable like me." She cups my face. I wipe her tears as my own tears threaten to escape my eyes. I hug her.

"I'm sorry, Mom," I apologize for making her cry. "I didn't mean to make you cry," I say as I pull away from the hug.

"I know, baby," Mom says.

"Mom, I want you to know that Alarick has been rude and disrespectful towards me. And the main thing is that he doesn't want to be with me."

Mom wipes her dry tears and says, "I just want you to be happy." I nod.

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After Mom leaves the pack house, Matt, Darius and I assemble in the kitchen to make dinner. "So, tell me," Darius says while he takes out the frying pan from the upper cabinet.

"What?" I ask.

"Why you don't want Mr. West to meet you?"

"I came back here without informing him," I tell him.

"Chris, you should've informed him," Matt says.

"I know but I didn't want to see him disappointed because of my early departure from his pack."

"You know, he will come here when he comes to know that you have returned to your pack," Matt says.

"I know."

"So, you're not planning to meet him when he comes here?" He asks.

"Yeah. When he comes here to meet me, you will have to lie that I'm not here," I say.

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Two days smoothly went by. Everything was back to normal. No one dared to mention Alarick's name in front of me and I was very thankful for that.

After having breakfast, Matt, Darius and I were in Matt's study discussing about our pack. Suddenly, there's a knock at the front door. Darius goes to answer it. After a few seconds, he comes back.

"It's Mr. West," he informs me.

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