

## Chapter 27

Since the car is a SUV, there is enough space for us and our luggage. We all get inside the car. Matt, Darius and I decide to sit at the back seats while Charles and Daniel decide to sit on the middle seats. Alarick sits on the passenger seat. It's obvious that he's trying to maintain distance. After bidding farewell to Alpha Brent, we head to the airport. During the ride, there is perfect silence. Charles and Daniel are facing each other and the expression on their faces tells me that they're talking through mind-link.

"Don't you think that there's too much silence in the car?" Darius mind-links Matt and me. Neither Matt nor I respond.

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We finally reach the airport after that silence-filled ride. At the check-in, I find that Alarick and I are boarding the same plane. I cannot believe how bad my luck is! When we get inside the plane, we make our way to our respective seats. After getting settled, it is announced that we should fasten our seat-belts. We do as we are told to do. And soon, we take off.

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After reaching the pack house, I straightaway go to my room and collapse on my bed. I'm exhausted! My eyes slowly start closing. And soon, I find myself sleeping peacefully.

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I'm woken up by Ciara shaking me violently. "Chriselda, it's evening! How long will you sleep?" She asks.

I sit up on my bed as I rub my eyes. "There are peaceful ways to wake someone up, you know," I say to her.

"I called your name many times but you weren't responding," she says. "So, I had to use a violent way to wake you up."

"Why are you here?" I ask.

"Aren't you happy to see me here?" She asks, faking hurt.

"Honestly, no," I jokingly say. She nudges at my elbow.

"By the way, I'm angry at you," she seriously says as she folds her arms.

"What have I done?" I ask as I run my fingers through my hair.

"You didn't even meet me after you returned from the Dawnfall Depths Pack," she says.

"A lot was going on so..." I trail off.

"Like?" She asks.

"I don't want to talk about it," I tell her as I look away. If I tell her that my mate denied me then she will be worried and I don't want her to get worried because of me.

"Chris, we are best friends and best friends don't keep secrets from each other," she says. I look at her. She's my best friend. I know that she cares for me. But I don't want to tell her about the person whom I want to forget about. "Chris, please tell me," she requests. When I don't say anything, she says, "If you don't want to tell me then it's fine. I understand that you don't trust me."

"Ciara, it's not about trust," I tell her. "I trust you more than I trust myself. It's just that things are complicated."

"I'll help you to uncomplicate things," she says as she gives me an assuring smile. I decide to tell her about Alarick. After all, she happens to be my best friend.

I take a deep breath. "My mate has denied me," I finally tell her.

"What!" She exclaims in shock, just the expression that I expected from her. "When did you find your mate? Who is he? Why did he deny you? Why didn't you tell me earlier?"

I hold up my hands to her, telling her to stop. "Breathe," I tell her. "Asking so many questions must've left you breathless."

She rolls her eyes at my sarcasm. "Who is he?" She asks calmly.

"Alarick West, the Alpha of the Dawnfall Depths Pack," I reply.

"He is your mate?" She asks surprisingly.

"Unfortunately."

"Why has he denied you?" She asks next.

"He doesn't want a mate." I shrug my shoulders.

"But why?"

"He says that he doesn't want a mate because he just doesn't," I say, quoting exact words of Alarick.

"But there must be some reason."

"I don't know."

"Haven't you tried to know the reason?"

"Honestly, I want to let this matter go altogether. I don't want to run behind him to know why he's denying me. I want to forget about him," I tell her.

"Will you be able to forget about him?"

"Ciara, I've lived with that guy for a week and the way he treated me, I think I'll easily forget about him."

"How did he treat you?" She questions.

"He was rude to me. He was disrespectful to me. He even called me an impostor! He said that I was pretending to be his mate so that I could get the Luna position in the most powerful pack in the world!"

"He really said that?" She asks shockingly. I can tell that she doesn't believe me. I don't blame her. She has this misconception that all the werewolves love their mates, that they can sacrifice their lives for their soul mates and all that crap. Well, the truth is that there are some werewolves who don't want their mates like my mate doesn't want me.

"Do you really think that I would make that all up?" I ask her.

"No but I really find it hard to believe that a werewolf has said such things about his mate," she tells me. I don't say anything to that.

"How many people know that Alarick has denied you?" She asks.

"From Alarick's pack, his Beta, his Gamma, his parents and his sister know. And from our pack, Matt, Darius, Mom and now you know."

She is silent for a while before speaking up, "Won't you do anything to make him accept you?"

"You've got to be kidding me," I tell her. "Didn't you hear what I said? He called me an impostor. He said that I'm pretending to be his mate so that I can get the Luna's position in his pack! Why would I do anything to make that person accept me?"

"I don't understand one thing. Why would he say that you're after Luna's position when you're already have a position as a Beta?" She asks. I can tell that she's puzzled. "Luna doesn't have any authority over her pack but a Beta does. A Luna is not allowed in making decisions for the pack while a Beta is. People say that a Luna's job is to just produce children but a Beta's job is to look after the pack when the Alpha is unavailable. Why would anyone be after the Luna's position knowing very well that once you become a Luna, people are just going to look at you as a breeding machine. If you ask me, being a Luna sucks." I can't help but laugh. I don't know whether she said all that just to make me feel better or whether those were really her opinions. Nonetheless, I would just say that she's being a true friend.

She made me laugh when I least expected it. Her listing the disadvantages of being a Luna was hilarious. All the things she said are true and that makes it even more hilarious. Now, I'm proud of Alarick denying me. I'm better off without him than being with him as the Luna of his pack.

"I love you, friend," I say as I hug Ciara.

"I love you too, friend," she says as she hugs me. When we pull apart, she says, "I think it was cruel of your mate to say that you were after the Luna's position. I mean, how did he even come up with that?"

"There's a story behind it," I say.

"What?" She asks.

I explain, "When I was living with his Pack, I came to know that there was this girl in their pack named Angelina who claimed to be his mate. And obviously, he said that she wasn't."

"Was this Angelina girl after the Luna's position?" Ciara asks.

"I don't know. I haven't even met her."

"Then, you should meet her and clarify things," she suggests. "Maybe Alarick misunderstood you because of this Angelina girl that's the reason why he is denying you. You also need to clarify things with him. You need to make him realize that you're really his mate!"

"He already knows that I'm his mate. But he doesn't want me! It's a simple fact, Ciara," I tell her.

"We should meet Angelina and find out what really happened," she says, ignoring what I said just now.

"No," I tell her. "I'm never going to the Dawnfall Depths Pack," I say with determination.

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Next Day...

"I hate you," I say to Ciara as we walk towards the pack house of the Dawnfall Depths Pack. She had earlier told Matt to inform Alarick that we'll be visiting his pack. I'm damn sure that Alarick is unhappy with this unpleasant news. Even I'm unhappy that I'll have to see his face. I really hate Ciara for bringing me here. If she wouldn't have emotionally blackmailed me then I would've been peacefully sitting in my pack house.

"I know you love me," she says. "And you're soon going to thank me when we clarify things and when Alarick accepts you as his mate."

I shake my head at her and say, "There's no harm in imagining things that won't even happen."

She nudges me. "Why are you being such a pessimist? There's no harm in being a little optimistic, you know."

"Why be optimistic and get all the hopes up just to see them crashing down?" I ask. She doesn't say anything. When we reach the pack house, we find a guy standing in front of the door. When he sees us, he greets us with a smile. "Hello. I'm Benjamin, the leader of the patrol team. Beta Charles told me that you will be visiting our pack. He told me to wait for you so that I could take you to him," he says.

"He's not here in the pack house?" I ask him.

"No one is in the pack house. Alpha Alarick, Beta Charles and Gamma Daniel have gone to the training ground for practice. I'll lead the way," he says and starts walking towards the forest.

"Actually, Benjamin," I say, stopping him in his tracks. "We don't want to disturb them in their training." To be honest, I don't want to see Alarick and that's why I'm making excuses. I continue, "We're here to meet Angelina. Can you give us directions to her house?"

"I will escort you to her house," he says with a smile. Ciara and I follow him as he leads the way. After reaching Angelina's house, we thank Benjamin and he leaves us to do our business. Ciara knocks on the front door. The door is opened by a girl who looks the same age as me.

"Are you Angelina?" Ciara asks her.

"Yes," replies the girl.

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