

Her Secret 29

CHAPTER 29 NO.29

Lana furrowed her brows at Avery's sudden declaration. She found it hard to believe her words just because from what she understood during her talk with Griffin and Ray, alphas with mates are not affected by other alphas' scent and yet it was clear to her that River was still conscious of Lana's. But what really made Lana aware that Avery was clearly lying was the fact that River was openly irritated by what she said. The expression on his face was a mix of anger and disappointment.

There was a long silence that followed after Avery said that and Lana felt like the air was suffocating her from the murderous tension that was coming out of River towards the blonde beauty.

"Are you fucking out of your mind?" he finally hissed at her.

Avery shrugged. "Okay fine, we haven't marked each other yet but that's just semantics, my dear. You must be aware that I only came to this town to be your mate, right?"

"Why are you talking about this, here?" he emphasized the last word through clenched teeth.

"Oh? Doesn't she know?" Avery lazily pointed at Lana. "It seemed to me like she knew everything about us werewolves since she was about to call me one, yes?" Avery said, her voice whispering the word 'werewolves' before she turned her attention to Lana.

"Yes..." Lana answered.

"But what I want to know is, what's your story? Why do you smell...so good? It's honestly driving me crazy." Avery pressed. She wasn't lying. She could feel herself being particularly drawn to the girl. It reminded her of her first time meeting River, a strong and capable alpha.

Lana opened her mouth, but closed it again when she remembered how dangerous it was for her to go around admitting she has alpha blood in her. Avery must be an alpha to even consider herself as River's mate and that only meant that Avery was a potential threat to Lana.

"Leave." River suddenly said, causing the two girls to look at him. He turned around to pick up his chair and gestured behind Avery. "People are coming."

Lana followed his eyes and realized that there was a small crowd approaching the booth. Avery then sighed, internally annoyed at how these people were ruining her fun. She then pulled out some money from her pocket and held it out to Lana.

"One ticket, please." She said sweetly.

Lana scrambled carelessly to retrieve a ticket for Avery before holding it out to her. Avery studied the girl's behaviour and then glanced over to River who was watching her attentively, as though he was

warning Avery not to do anything stupid again, especially since there were other people around now. Avery smiled at him before she reached out to grab the ticket from Lana's hand, she purposefully brushed her fingers on Lana's.

"T-Thank you for your purchase and I hope you have a great time at the festival." Lana muttered the scripted line they were supposed to say to everyone who bought a ticket.

Avery's fingers lingered for a moment. "I hope we get to know each other better, Lana." She said as she placed the bill on the table in front of Lana.

"...yes," Lana replied, full of uncertainty. She watched Avery walk away and knew for a fact that her peaceful day at this small town was about to turn completely hectic.

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After Avery left, Lana and River were occupied with the sudden surge of visitors buying tickets to the festival. Lana tried to focus on her duties instead of wrecking her brain with thoughts of Avery and everything that had just happened. Occasionally, she would glance over to River to see how he is doing. It was no surprise to Lana to see that he was back to being the typical version of River who is kind and friendly and is loved by many due to both his looks and personality.

He chatted happily with the people, flashing his brilliant and charming smile at them and Lana could've sworn that she saw both the ladies and men swoon over that. Lana smiled to herself at the realization that River would never ever show this version of himself in front of Lana and a part of her finds that completely understandable. He does hate her after all.

After what felt like hours of greeting visitors and constantly smiling, Lana felt her cheeks starting to ache. She slumped in her chair and let out a sigh of relief once the last few people left the booth. She then reached down into the bag and pulled out her water. She glanced over at River who had the same idea as her. The two drank in silence until Lana decided to break the silence.

"Are you alright?" she blurted.

River wiped his lips with the back of his hand. He then looked at Lana. "What does that mean?"

Her grip against her bottle tightened as she mentally prepared herself for River's snarky remarks. "I mean...like are you doing okay?"

"...small talk again?"

"Yes...and no?"

He sighed. "Listen...avoid being alone with Avery at all cost. Do you understand?" he suddenly said. Lana wondered if River could read her mind, since that was the only thing that she was constantly thinking

about.

“But isn’t she your mate?”

“She’s not!” he replied almost instantly. He clicked his tongue and turned away. “She’s just a family friend I knew who lived in the city. But, she recently moved to Rosecliff. Just a few days ago.”

Lana nodded, with River’s explanation she understood why no one knew about Avery since she just arrived at town. Avery would probably be properly introduced as their classmate after founder’s day and she had no doubt that Avery would be instantly popular among her peers.

“So, she was lying when she said she only came here to be your mate?” she pressed.

“Look, I don’t fucking know okay? She just appeared out of the blue one day and is doing as she pleases.” He said irritably as he fiddled with the plastic bottle in his hands. “She really gets on my nerves sometimes.”

Lana chuckled. “Do you not like her? Wouldn’t it be better for you to find a mate so you can stop being affected by my scent? That’s been bothering you...right?” Lana asked.

“...you ask a lot of questions, you know that?”

“Then, just answer one of them.”

“No.”

“Right, of course, sorry for overstepping.” She muttered.

“I mean, my answer is no.”

“To which question?” she asked with a raised eyebrow.

River shrugged as he tossed the bottle back into his bag. “That’s for you to find out.”

“You really are annoying.” She sighed. Lana did not want to overthink this and decided to believe that River did not truly hate Avery but was just trying to get used to her overwhelming and rather difficult personality. She thought that would be the only reasonable question that he would answer no too. What else could a simple ‘no’ mean?

“Tell me something I don’t know.” River said drily.

Lana brushed off River’s statement and changed the subject. “But Avery...she’s really pretty. What does she look like in her wolf form?” Lana asked.

“She looks the same.”

“What does that mean?” she questioned. So far, no one actually resembled their wolf counterparts. The only thing that remained consistent was the colour of their eyes. Lana then pondered if Avery’s fur was a shade of gold since she’s blonde.

“Do I have to spell everything out to you?” his statement snapped her back from her thoughts.

Lana scoffed. “Well duh, since you want to be all vague and not reply like a normal person.”

“Am I talking to a young adult or a toddler?” he sneered.

Lana feigned laughter. “I seriously believe that should be my line.” She smiled.

“I wonder what Railey would think if he saw this side of you?” he suddenly said, causing Lana to immediately turn to him. He wore his usual poker face and that only agitated Lana even more.

“What does he have anything to do with this conversation?”

“I’m just saying, the face you show in front of him is so different compared to your true colours.”

“Hah! That’s like the pot calling the kettle black, River.”

“Yea, but I’m not in love with those people, now am I?”

Lana’s face heated up. She turned her body away from River and touched her warm cheeks to calm herself. “I’m not...in love with him...”

River laughed. “You aren’t fooling anyone here. Your face is completely red.”

“S-Shut up!” she yelled. “I just like him. It’s a tiny crush! A tiny one, I swear!”

River’s expression turned sour. “You wouldn’t react like that if it’s just a tiny crush. Besides, what do you even see in him?” he asked.

Lana was surprised by the seriousness of his tone. She moved back to look at him. His eyes were already on her and their gazes met. They stayed like that for a moment as though it suddenly turned into a staring competition.

Lana sighed and dropped her gaze. “Why are you asking? Are you seriously curious about my taste in men?” she teased.

“No.” he bluntly replied. “I’m only curious as to why...him?”

River was not making his hatred for Zane subtle at all, Lana thought. If she played her cards right, she would be able to finally find out what actually happened between them. But, a part of her was warning her not to push the boundaries, because sometimes there are things better left unknown. Lana pushed away those thoughts and decided to just ask River directly.

“...what’s your problem with Zane anyway?” she frowned.

“Answer my question.” He said, ignoring her own question.

“Why should I? I know that all you are going to do is bad-mouth him in front of me.”

River looked almost happy. As though his face was screaming ‘I knew it’ as he casually leaned against his chair and placed one leg across his thigh. “So, you like him enough to defend him? That’s interesting.”

His sudden cocky attitude did not sit right with Lana. “Don’t put words in my mouth.” She snapped. “If you have something to say, just say it instead of beating around the bush. It’s frustrating just talking to you!”

“Why are you getting so agitated? I didn’t even say anything bad about him. Not yet that is.”

“So, you admit that you were going to say something bad about him?”

River smirked. “Who knows?” he lazily shrugged.

Lana stood up, causing River to look up at her. “...you really are a piece of work, River.”

River did not know she could make such an expression. If anything, this exasperated look plus her lightly pink cheeks made River want to tease her even more. Her scent suddenly smelt sweeter and stronger. River could feel the slight burn of his insides as his mind was threatening to overwhelm his body to follow his instincts. He did not like it one bit and wanted to run away from her. An alphas scent really is a nuisance.

“Ahem!” someone cleared their throat. River let out an inward sigh of relief as reality kicked in and he found himself in control of his body again. The two then looked over to the person standing in front of the table with a smile on her face but her expression was anything but happy. “I had a feeling to suddenly check up on you two, and good thing I did.” Mrs. Hathaway said as she placed a paper plate with some buttered croissants on the table in front of them.

“Mrs. Hathaway...we were just talking.” Lana said followed by a nervous laugh. She really got caught red-handed by their teacher even after they were reminded numerous times to behave themselves and not fight among each other.

“You look like you are about to hit Mr. Attwood, Ms. Danley.” She smiled.

“Haha, please Mrs. Hathaway, I would never do something so violent.” She lied through her teeth. She pondered for a solid second, would she have hit him if Mrs. Hathaway did not appear all of a sudden? In all honesty, she probably would’ve if he continued being a jerk.

Mrs. Hathaway then sighed. “You two only have 2 hours left together, so please try not to murder each other. Can you do that for me?” she pleaded kindly.

“Yes, ma’am.” Both Lana and River answered.

“Well then, have some croissants to calm down. Can you two do that?” she asked, feeling as though she was talking to middle schoolers instead of high schoolers.

“Yes, ma’am.” The two repeated.

Mrs. Hathaway nodded at their sudden obedient behaviour and walked away. Lana fell back on her chair and picked up a croissant. She pushed the plate over to River who picked up his. The two of them ate in silence, yet their minds were anything but silent.