

Her Secret 55

CHAPTER 55 NO.55

“Why do you think it’s a werewolf that’s doing this? It could be any other predators that live in the forest, right?” Lana asked them, her mind quickly going back to the topic at hand.

“We did consider that possibility but upon further examination of the wounds on the animals, we could tell that the culprit is most likely one of us.” Ray said, trying his best to be vague so that he could spare Lana the gory details but Lana could imagine.

“Then...do you guys eat, um, hunt wild animals?” she asked hesitantly, hoping that a simple question like that would not offend Ray or Jack.

The two men exchanged glances before turning back to Lana. “Well, we haven’t really hunted for food ever since we integrated into human society. In other words, normal food keeps us satisfied just like any other human.” Ray explained with an amused smile on his face.

“Just checking,” Lana said with a nervous laugh.

“But the troubling part about this entire situation is the fact that these animals were not killed for consumption.” He added after a beat.

Lana frowned at the peculiarity of that sudden fact. “What do you mean? They weren’t eaten, like at all?”

Jack shook his head. “As disturbing as it sounds, the animals were killed for fun. Their bodies were toyed with and left out in the open for everyone to see.”

“That’s...” Lana muttered and soon found herself to be loss of words. “Do werewolves usually do that?” she asked doubtfully.

Ray and Jack gave her a strange look. “Seriously? What are we, savages?” Jack huffed.

“I’m just asking! It hasn’t been that long since I found out about the existence of werewolves in the first place. Can’t blame me for asking things I’m unaware of.” she clarified with a pout.

Ray gave her a sympathetic look. “But to answer your question, no, it’s not a normal thing to do at all. I don’t think it could have been done by anyone from our pack.” Ray muttered to himself. Lana wanted to question him about what he meant but before she could get a chance to speak up, Ray let out a deep sigh.

“Ray?” she called out, clearly concerned.

“I’m okay. Jack and I will head out once Taylor comes in for his shift. We need to further our

investigation about this issue and we'll need the help of the others as well." he said, turning to Jack who gave him a firm nod.

"Let me help too," she told him confidently.

Ray gave her an apologetic smile. "No, Lana. It's a school day and as usual I want you to be home by 8pm. Got it?"

Lana crossed her arms around her chest and frowned. "Come on Ray, I can help you guys with the tracking or even—"

"No means no Lana. Besides, you have your midterms coming up and I don't want you to be distracted because of this. I just told you to keep you updated on what's happening in the forest and that's all." He said firmly.

Lana stared at him for a long moment. She could feel Jack's eyes nervously darting from Ray to Lana, hoping that they won't start arguing over this all of a sudden.

After a moment, Lana let out a dramatic sigh as she waved her hands in defeat. "Fine. I'll drop it. But please remember to keep me updated on your investigation." She said.

"Of course." Ray smiled.

"Oh and one more thing," she called out to him.

"Yes?"

"Is Taylor a werewolf as well?" she asked. Just at that moment, the door to the station was pushed open aggressively.

"Hello people, I have arrived!" Taylor boomed with a proud smile on his face. The three of them stared at him in complete silence.

"No." Ray and Jack answered simultaneously. Lana chuckled at their reaction.

"Hey...what's going on?" Taylor asked them curiously.

"Ha, it's nothing." Lana waved him off.

"I have a really strong feeling that you three are hiding something from me." He huffed as he headed towards the lockers.

"You are just imagining it," Jack replied indifferently which only made Lana laugh louder.

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The chattering among the students echoed through the lab as they filed in and went to their seats. Lana, Carmen and Suzie sat at their usual table as they huddled close to each other to continue the conversation they were having earlier.

“Honestly, that’s kinda gross.” Suzie grimaced.

Carmen rolled her eyes at Suzie’s insensitive response but chose to ignore her. “Did Ray give you any updates since yesterday?” she asked Lana.

“Nah, he came back super late and by that time I was already asleep. When I woke up to get ready for school, he had already left for work.”

“Damn, bet this animal massacre is taking a huge toll on him then.” Suzie chimed in.

“Oh my god Suzie! Can’t you be a little more sensitive?” Carmen snapped.

“Huh what? It sounded like a massacre to me!” she huffed. “I’m just calling it as it is.”

“Shh, guys keep it down.” Lana whispered, afraid that her fellow classmates would overhear them talking about the situation that was happening at the forest. Her two friends mouthed an apology to her.

“But, it has to be another animal doing this right? Like a bear?” Suzie asked her.

Lana shrugged, fully aware that she couldn’t tell her friends about the existence of werewolves. All she could do now was feign ignorance. The only reason why she told her friends about this in the first place was to see what they had to say about the situation but so far Suzie is just grossed out by the thought of dead animals laying around and Carmen is slowly starting to come up with implausible theories.

“They aren’t really sure what or who is doing it but it’s strange that it’s always that specific spot where their carcasses are found.”

“Could it be a territorial thing?” Carmen suggested.

“What do you mean? Whatever is killing the animal is marking its territory?” Lana asked, her interest piqued over the mention of territory. This suggestion of hers made more sense than her earlier theory of it being related to cults.

“Yeah, like that’s what animals do right? Especially predators? They want everyone to know that this is their domain or whatever.”

“Hmm, in a way that does make sense.” Lana muttered to herself, taking a mental note to ask Ray or

Jack about it later.

“Or it could be a warning.” Someone said, causing Lana to turn to Suzie who frantically shook her head. She then glanced at someone standing behind Lana. Lana quickly turned around, almost smacking her head against Avery’s own. Lana’s eyes widened, surprised that she could not sense Avery’s presence even when she was standing so close to Lana. Avery laughed. “Did I startle you? Sorry.” She said with an amused tone.

Before Lana could say anything, the girls watched as Avery walked towards an empty seat at their table and sat down.

“Avery?” Lana called out, confused as to why the girl was sitting with them in the first place.

“Oh, you don’t mind if I join you girls, right?” she asked even though she already sat down.

“Of course not,” Suzie beamed. Ever since Avery was introduced to their class, Suzie has been obsessed with her. She often raved about how Avery is beautiful and a fashion icon and Lana was certain that Suzie was starstruck at that very moment.

“You heard everything we were talking about?” Carmen questioned, finding it strange that Avery could even overhear them when she was initially two tables down and sitting with River and the others.

Lana glanced behind to where River, Luis and Maddison were seated. They wore confused expressions as they gawked at Avery.

“Well, I heard some bits and pieces.” Avery replied as she nonchalantly checked her painted nails.

“Okay, so why are you here?” Carmen asked, frowning at the girl.

“Carmen!” Suzie hissed at her friend’s blunt question.

Avery laughed as her eyes fell on Lana. “I just wanted a change of scenery.” She smiled.

“What did you mean earlier? Why did you say it could be a warning? A warning to who?” Lana pressed.

Avery raised an eyebrow as she leaned forward, her chest pressed against the long table. Lana could smell the strong perfume that Avery was wearing to the point where she was certain she could taste it at the back of her throat. “You sound so serious, Lana. Like a detective working on a case.” She smirked.

Lana smiled back. “Are you diverting from the topic?”

Avery’s hand slid forward as her fingers brushed against Lana’s own. “Oh? And what if I am?” she whispered, her fingers slowly moving upwards until she ran her slender digits over Lana’s knuckles. The touch was light and gentle, Lana would have mistaken it for the passing wind if she did not watch Avery

fingers moving.

“Um...” Carmen muttered in complete confusion. She had no idea what she was witnessing in front of her. Ever since Avery was introduced, she had a feeling that the girl has a flirtatious side to her but witnessing it first hand was rather overwhelming. Carmen glanced over to Suzie, hoping that she would find this situation to be rather strange but to her dismay, Suzie was loving every moment of it. She beamed brightly like a fangirl about to scream from delight.

Lana’s smile did not fade as she moved her hand forward, grabbing on to Avery’s wrist. Her sudden movement caused the three girls around her to flinch. Lana then looked up at the door and loosened her grip on Avery’s wrist.

“Okay class, settle down!” their teacher, Mr. Stevenson called out as he entered the lab.

Avery smiled at Lana before turning her attention away. She let out a soft chuckle when she could feel River’s burning gaze on her. Avery found it absolutely hilarious that he wore such a murderous expression over her tiny jest with Lana. He was more far gone than she initially expected.

Carmen leaned closer to Lana’s ear. “I didn’t know you and Avery were friends.” She whispered.

“We’re more of—acquaintances.” Lana sighed as her attention went back to Mr. Stevenson in front of them talking about the different experiments they were going to do today.

“Well, she looks like she really likes you. Do you think she swings that way?” Carmen joked.

Lana let out a soft laugh. “Even if she does, I doubt she likes me.” her mind immediately went to her first impression of Avery, at how she carries herself with poise and confidence yet whenever she opened her mouth, it was one teasing comment after another. But Lana never truly questioned Avery’s sexuality until Carmen brought it up.

“Okay class, I want everyone to partner up for this next activity.” Their teacher called out to them.

“Lana! Let’s be pairs,” Avery immediately said with her signature smile.

Carmen laughed. “And what were you just saying?” she teased Lana.

Lana stayed silent as she observed Avery, trying to figure out what exactly she wished to accomplish by clinging onto Lana like this. River’s warning to stay away from Avery kept coming back to her mind. Everyone soon moved to be next to their partners, including Avery who switched seats with Carmen. She then pressed her shoulder against Lana’s knowingly.

“What are you doing, Avery?” Lana asked her firmly, trying her hardest to focus on the instructions her teacher was explaining at the front.

“Whatever do you mean?” she asked back, which a mischievous gleam in her eye.

“If you are here just to tease and bother me then I kindly ask you to pair up with someone else—” Lana’s words were trailed off when Avery leaned in closer to her. She tensed when she felt Avery’s hand on her thigh.

“Don’t you want to find out what’s going on in the forest?” she whispered against Lana’s ear, her warm breath tickling Lana’s cheek.

“Do you really know what’s going on, or is this some elaborate scheme to mess with me again?” Lana said back as her hand went to pry Avery’s grip from her thigh. This only led to Avery tightening her grip, causing Lana to shift slightly in her seat from the sudden pressure.

“Meet me after school to find out. I’ll be waiting behind the school building.” she insinuated. Lana stayed silent as she felt Avery pull her hand away. Avery then blew air against Lana’s ear, causing her to jolt up from her seat in surprise.

“Miss Danley! Is there something you would like to share with the class?” Mr. Stevenson asked with his hands on his hips. He looked at Lana disapprovingly.

Lana could feel the gazes of her fellow classmates and felt her face get hotter from embarrassment. “No, sir.” She muttered as she sat back down and turned to glare furiously at Avery who only smiled innocently in return.