

Her Secret 76

CHAPTER 76 NO.76

“Is everything okay between you and River?” Avery asked, catching Lana completely off guard.

“Why...do you ask?” she hesitantly asked back, not even sure how to reply to that question in the first place.

“I mean you seemed pretty upset that night and well...”

“We aren’t really in speaking terms,” Lana blurted out, wanting to stop Avery from worrying too much about this issue.

“Oh? He must’ve sucked in bed, huh?” Avery teased with a little giggle.

Lana scoffed. “That’s not it. I just think that maybe we were only meant to be acquaintances—nothing more and nothing less.” She admitted, feeling her chest tightening up at just the thought of that.

She did think about their relationship and it did not take her too long to find it rather odd how River spent most of his time hating and avoiding her while Lana wasn’t even bothered to make sense of his hatred towards her in the first place. But when they were forced into situations where they had to get along, even then they mostly argued about the smallest things. It was clear to her that they would never get along like normal friends and now that they have slept together—things were only going to get more awkward in the long run.

“I doubt that.” Avery claimed.

“I don’t know if you are aware but River hates my guts.”

“Why does he hate you? Did you break his heart or something?”

Lana frowned at this déjà vu moment she was having. “I didn’t.”

“Then I don’t see any reason for him to hate you.”

“He admitted it straight to my face.”

Avery laughed as though Lana had just told her the funniest joke she has ever heard. “You do know that River lies to hide his true feelings right?” Avery said, feeling tears forming in her eyes from how much she laughed.

“What does that supposed to mean?” Lana frowned as she tried to determine if Avery was being genuine or her typical teasing self.

“It means what it means. He is the type to lie to someone just so he doesn’t have to admit certain things. Besides, even though he seems like a pompous spoiled brat on the outside, he is genuinely kind-hearted and a very caring person. So if you told me that he straight up told you he ‘hates’ you then I’m calling his bluff.”

Lana paused for a moment, trying to figure out what Avery was trying to accomplish by saying all these nice things about River. “You sound like you are trying to convince me to go on a blind date with him or something.” She said sarcastically.

Avery rolled her eyes at Lana who was starting to show off her more irritable sides. “Have you ever heard of the concept of fated mates?” She quickly changed the topic since Lana was not making an effort to listen to what Avery had to say.

“Are those like soulmates?”

“Similar concept but not quite. Fated mates is a very much real concept in werewolf society. They say that once you meet your fated mate, you start to long to be next to them whenever you are apart—their scent smells a thousand times sweeter compared to other potential mates and your body, mind and soul will only crave and yearn to be with them.”

“Sounds like a hassle.” Lana muttered, trying to hide the fact that she actually found that concept to be rather romantic.

Avery drily laughed at Lana’s response. “Well, you might not like what I have to say next.” She said as she pulled over in front of Lana’s house.

Lana raised an eyebrow at Avery. “What? You think that River and I are fated mates?” she asked her in a sarcastic tone.

“Bingo. I seriously think that you two might actually be fated mates. Before, the thought did come to me but you were just a human who smelt like an alpha. But now things are different, you are slowly becoming a werewolf and everything makes sense now.”

“Stop.” Lana said as she held out a hand to Avery. “I think you might be overthinking everything, Avery. River is just attracted to my alpha traits. Nothing else.”

Avery sighed. “Every alphas are attracted to other alphas in the same manner but you don’t see me completely captivated by you.”

Lana scoffed. “That’s definitely not the case...the only reason we even had sex was because of the ruts we were experiencing.” She said as she quickly grabbed her things to leave before she got upset with the things Avery was saying.

“You’re not listening to me, Lana.” Avery sighed, wondering why Lana was being in denial in the first

place.

“Because you are not making any sense! He isn’t in love with me, fated mates or not River Attwood despises me.” Lana snapped.

“...okay. I’m sorry for being too pushy over this topic.” Avery apologised as she did not want Lana to completely push her away over this small debate.

“No...don’t apologise. I just need time to wrap my head around a lot of things right now and I can’t spend more time overthinking about River right now. Things are fine the way it is now, we are back to square one where we ignore each other like the plague and that’s fine with me.” She sighed. “Thanks for today. I’ll see you tomorrow, Avery.” She said as she pushed the door open.

“Then answer me one thing before you leave.” Avery called out.

Lana paused and glanced back at the blonde. “What is it?”

“Why were you crying that night?”

“...What?”

“The night after you and River slept together, in the car—you were crying. Why? Did he hurt you? Did the two of you argue? Did you regret sleeping with him? I know it’s a personal question and I avoided bringing it up all these while but now things are different and I hope we can talk about it since I’m starting to feel guilty that I allowed you to sleep with him in the first place.” Avery said, her expression was serious and it made Lana truly admire this side of her.

“Don’t do that. Don’t blame yourself over my own decisions.” Lana warned.

“Then answer me, Lana.”

“It doesn’t matter anymore.”

“It does.”

“What do you want me to even say, Avery? Because I’ve spent hours late at night trying to understand why I even cried in the first place. All I know is that I was hurt by the things he said and that’s stupid because it’s River and everything that comes out from his mouth is just—so fucking hurtful!” she sobbed, those feelings from before rushing over her instantly. She clicked her tongue and rushed out of the car.

“Lana, wait!” Avery called out.

“Nothing is ever going to happen between River and me. And you want to know why? Because he hates

me.” She spat.

“...why do you keep saying that?”

“Because that’s the only thing that makes sense right now. Goodnight, Avery. I’ll see you tomorrow at the party.” She said as she shut the car door and turned around to head towards her house.

Avery sat there for a long moment, even after Lana walked into her house. The day started with her curious to get the questions regarding Lana answered but they left Griffin’s place with more questions than answers as per usual. She knew that she should have kept her mouth shut about her theory that Lana and River were fated mates but she did not expect to dig up something that has been buried deep inside her ever since that fateful night.

She wanted to do what she was good at and find out what River even said to her that was so hurtful but none of those even mattered now since the only thing that was occupying Avery’s mind was the way Lana seemed to be trying her hardest to convince herself that River truly hates her. But why? With a heavy heart and jumbled up thoughts, Avery forced herself to drive away—afraid that if she lingered long enough, she might just break into Lana’s room and interrogate her even further. But that’s not a very nice thing to do after all.

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Ray was standing by the counter as he absent-mindedly stirred his mug of coffee, his gaze went to the white box that Lana placed on the counter. She slowly slid it over to him. He looked away from the box and met her eyes.

“1 more minute and it would’ve been past your curfew.” He said.

“I know, but the girls wanted to head to the mall for some milkshakes and...I bought you these.” She said, gesturing to the box.

“Are you bribing me?” he asked her. “What are those?”

Lana smiled but internally she wondered when it became a crime to buy desserts for people. “Cream puffs.”

Ray’s eyes widened in excitement but he quickly controlled his expression. “So you are bribing me.”

“Well...yes.” Lana said, following the flow since she did have to ask permission from him to go to Isabel’s birthday party tomorrow.

Ray thought about it for a moment before caving in and reaching to pull out a cream puff. “Speak.”

“Isabel is holding a birthday party tomorrow and she invited the entire grade, I know I’m technically still

grounded but I'm here to ask permission to go to her party tomorrow...please?" she ended with her signature sweet smile.

Ray studied her expression for a moment as he silently indulged in the cream puff in his hands. He wore a poker face throughout this moment and Lana was really convinced that he was going to say no. Maybe if he did say no, Lana could spend the night sorting out her own emotions instead of ignoring them and sweeping them under the rug.

"I'm sure a terrible parent." Ray suddenly said.

"What?" Lana asked in concern.

"How can I say no to your request when one, your midterms just ended so you deserve to let loose and relax and two, you got me cream puffs...so,"

"So?"

"You may go to Isabel's birthday party. But only if you promise not to do anything reckless! Do you hear me, Lana Danley?"

"Yes sir,"

"And drink responsibly."

"There won't be alcohol."

"Please, I was a teenager once." He said as he narrowed his eyes at her. "Don't make me regret my decision, Lana or else—" he then motioned his thumb across his neck.

Lana let out a nervous laugh as she started to back away from him to leave the kitchen. "Yes, sir." She called out to him before rushing up to her room, phone in her hands as she was already texting Suzie and Carmen the good news.