

Never again by Malgorzata Uchto

Chapter 1

1. Heartbroken

Mandy's POV

... "I, Alpha Andrew Miller, reject you, Amanda Anderson, as my mate and Luna." He stated, gazing at me with his cold eyes.

Am I imagining things? Is this really Andrew – my Andrew? I quickly searched my mind to check if last night was real.

Yes, yes, yes it was!

Here I am in his hotel room bed, sore, a little bruised, and sated. I just found my mate, my other half, and I was finally, wholeheartedly happy. Just to have my heart crushed? No! This had to be a bad dream. I blinked my eyes a few times, holding the bedsheet to my chest for dear life, and stared at him, dumbfounded.

"What did you say?" I finally asked.

"Are you deaf? I said I reject you as-"

"I heard you the first time." I cut him off, standing up from bed searching for my dress "...but why?" I found the dress and quickly put it on, not caring about my nakedness or lack of underwear.

He stood there with a cold demeanor. I couldn't decipher his emotions. Where is that sweet, caring, and loving guy from last night? Is he bipolar, perhaps?

Putting his hands in jeans pockets, he took three large steps forward. Stopping a few inches before me, I had to tilt my head up to meet his gaze. He was so tall.

"You thought I would accept you?" he scoffed and continued, "You are just a weak and pathetic human. You are not fit to be Luna. I need someone strong, someone who is capable of leading by my side, a worthy one."

I stood there frozen in place, not daring to move my shaky legs. I knew once I moved, I would collapse. I refused to give him this satisfaction. I would not break.

He lifted his hand and tucked my loose hair behind my ear, sending shivers down my body. His lips formed a disgusting smirk, and he added, "Although... I must say. You were a good fuck." He chuckled. "Probably the best I've had, sweetheart."

And that was it. I stepped away from him, with all the courage I could muster, sizing him up. I looked him dead in the eyes and opened my mouth, "I, Amanda Anderson, accept your rejection." And with that, I left...

...

Beep, beep, beep

I woke up in a cold sweat, panting. Dear God, what was that? It had been five years since that horrible night, and four years since the last time I dreamt about it. What does it mean? I haven't thought about him in years. And I was surely not thinking about him now! Was I going crazy? Was this the effect of overworking myself? Yep, that must be the answer.

I got up from my comfy bed and looked at the digital clock on my nightstand. It showed the time in big green numbers: 6:45am. Dragging my numb body to the bathroom, I stopped in front of the mirror and checked the damage.

My brown hair was chaos, a huge mess. It definitely needed to be taken care of. Not just my hair – my face looked pale, and I had dark circles under my gray eyes, probably the effect of lack of sleep. And my eyes, God my eyes were lifeless. I could play a zombie role in some stupid sitcom. Is this me? I wondered. Unfortunately, yes.

Sighing, I started my morning routine. After a refreshing, warm shower, I wrapped a white towel around my small frame and went straight to the walk-in closet to find a proper outfit for work. After looking for a few minutes, I finally decided to wear a knee-length red sleeveless dress that hugged my upper body tightly then flared out over my hips in a flowing skirt. I chose a matching set of underwear and black stilettos to go with it. After blow drying my hair, I put on enough makeup to at least look presentable. Then I left my bedroom and went to the kitchen in search of the love of my life: coffee.

The kitchen opened up to the dining room, only separated by an island with a dark wooden countertop. My kitchen was painted dark gray, which perfectly fit the white cabinets and stainless-steel equipment. I loved the industrial style, that's why my whole house was arranged this way. Thank you, 'Magnolia Design' and Debbie Mitchell, for your work. I loved my home. It gave me a sense of security and peace.

After switching on the coffee machine, I started to make breakfast. Today's special was a veggie omelet. Picking up the ingredients from the fridge and beginning to cook, my thoughts went back to my dream. Why now? Was it a warning or something? How to interpret it? Was it a good or bad sign?

I was rejected, humiliated, and left heartbroken – all because I was human. My wish to be loved was the most stupid thing I could have ever longed for. It wasn't that I still cared about him or missed him or even loved him. It was just one night – a one-night stand. It was just a little irrelevant episode in my life. Not worth mentioning to anyone.

After finishing my breakfast and coffee, I went to my car and drove to work. After driving for 30 minutes in my lovely golden BMW, I reached the

underground parking lot and parked my car in my designated place. I went inside the elevator to William's Holding building. I pressed my floor number and waited.

At the main lobby, the elevator doors opened, and more people came in, greeting me with a smile, which I returned. Feeling a little tired, I took a few steps back and closed my eyes, placing my head on the elevator's wall to rest.

"Hello Ms. Anderson, how was your weekend?" a familiar voice made me snap out of my rest. Damian Kelly, our new IT project manager, who started two weeks ago. Good asset to our department.

"Hello, Mr. Kelly, it was full of relaxation, good food, lots of fun, and a great amount of sleep!" I answered with a trained fake smile. My weekend was the opposite of my made-up claim, but he didn't need to know that.

"Looks like you had fun, Ms. Anderson. Perhaps you will share some good stories at our monthly meeting this afternoon?"

Is he trying to piss me off? Cause he might succeed.

"Well, Mr. Kelly, my private life stays private. I hope you will present some magnificent project ideas at that meeting." I answered coldly to shut him up. Remember who's the boss here. He responded with a nod and turned back, waiting for his floor.

Reaching the top floor, I went straight to the CEO's office, and after walking in without a knock, I was met with the most horrible sight. My boss, the famous Ryan Williams, was sucking face with his new flavor of the week. I think her name is Darcy or Daisy, whatever. Gross.

I cleared my throat to announce my presence. They immediately stopped and looked my way. Embarrassed, she jumped off his lap and rearranged her black, way-too-short-for-the-morning dress and stood next to Ryan's desk.

I had gotten used to that kind of situation over the past seven years of working with Ryan. He excused her and whispered something in her ear, making her blush. Giggling, she gave him a peck on the lips and headed to the door. I walked her out with my eyes. After seeing the door close, I turned back and looked at him.

“Well, well, well, I see you had a great weekend.” I teased.

“You should try it sometime. It’s refreshing and relieves stress. I’m all at your service.” He said, wiggling his eyebrows.

I laughed; full belly laughed so hard I had to put my hands on my stomach. A few tears left my eyes. Moments later, I could finally open my eyes and look at Ryan.

“Every time it’s the same reaction. Will you ever consider my proposal?” he asked, annoyed with my response.

“You know I love you Ryan, but this,” I pointed my finger between us, “will never happen.”

“I’m persistent.”

“And I’m stubborn.”

Sighing, he sat in his chair and put his hands on the black wooden desk.

“What brings you here at 8:00am? It’s not something I forgot, is it?” He asked, a little nervous.

"No, you are off the hook this time." I smiled.

"Uff, then what is it?" he visibly relaxed.

"Peter." was my simple response.

Peter Collins, my best friend, joined our company six years ago, and we immediately felt a connection, like we were twins. Although we looked very different. While I was short at 5'4, he stood tall at 6'2. Peter had auburn hair, while mine was dark brown. He had beautiful amber eyes, mine were gray. I was human while he was a werewolf, but we kept that a secret. Besides looking physically opposite, we had similar characters: stubborn, crazy, hardworking, and loyal to family and friends.

Lately, he had started to act strangely. Skipping our Friday movie marathons at my house. Finding any reasonable excuse to not go to Barry's for Monday's beer evenings. He even stopped crashing at my place after his Saturday family dinner to complain about them.

It must be something serious. This can't be something as simple as a hidden partner he was dating in secret to not scare him away with his lifestyle or family problems. He would have come to me first to find a solution to something like that. I was concerned about him, and I needed to find out what was going on.

"What about Peter? He's dead?" Ryan widened his eyes.

I sighed, shook my head, and put my hands on his desk. "No. He's not dead." I answered. "His behavior seems odd these last two weeks, and I don't know what's going on." I cleared my throat to ask a frightening question... "Did he..." I gulped, "Did he resign?"

I looked him straight in the eyes, hoping his answer wouldn't break me more than I already was, but his soft and sorrowful eyes said it all. "He did," I stated, defeated. I hung my head even lower, trying to fight the tears that appeared in my eyes. I bit my bottom lip hard to not let them flow. Moments later, I stood up straight and released the breath I didn't know I was holding. I turned to leave his office.

"Listen, Mandy, he asked me not to tell you until he's ready." Ryan's voice stopped me when I was reaching for the doorknob.

"Thank you for telling me. Your secret is safe with me." I answered, not looking back.

"I'm sorry, Mandy!" was the last thing I heard as the door closed behind me.

...

Finally, the day was over, and after my morning conversation with Ryan, my mind couldn't focus on anything other than Peter. He was leaving me. HE WAS LEAVING ME. Why? What happened? I needed answers, but I couldn't pry. I had promised Ryan secrecy. All the meetings today flew by in a blur. I just asked my assistant to email me the notes. I would deal with them in the evening when my mind was clear. I hoped. Even Daniel didn't make any comments about my behavior. Good boy.

Descending in the elevator to my car, my phone rang. Reaching into my purse, I grabbed it, and when I saw the name on the screen, my heart started to beat at 100 mph. Should I answer or not?!

Taking a few deep breaths and preparing for 'the end', I clicked the answer button.

"Hello handsome, glad you remember your bestie," I said with a smile, hearing him chuckle on the other end.

"Well, hello to you too, gorgeous," he replied, with a happy voice.

"I'm in the elevator now. Can I call you back when I get home?" I tried to postpone my heartbreak for a little while.

"That's alright. I'm actually at your place right now. I ordered pizza and brought beers. What do you say?"

It wouldn't have surprised me before, but now, after not knowing what is going on, I was confused. What was the occasion?

"Fine with me, baby. Be there in 40 minutes, I need to pick up my order from Pam's Bakery, ok?" I replied.

"Oh, please tell me you ordered strawberry muffins?" he asked dreamily. "You know I love them. Damn girl, I'm already drooling!" he yelled.

"Yep, I did," I said with a smirk. "Ok, gotta go if you want those muffins." I ended the call and exhaled. "Oh God, please don't do this to me." I prayed while buckling my seat belt and starting the engine to head back home. "You can do this. You are strong." I told myself, leaving the parking lot.

...

"We need to talk."

I gulped. This is it. Prepare for the impact.

When I came home, Peter was already sitting on my black leather couch, munching on pizza, and drinking his fourth beer. 'Great, thanks for waiting.' I thought to myself.

He greeted me as usual with a bear hug and a long kiss on my cheek, giving me his million-dollar smile. I took notice of his demeanor. He looked confident, happy, even a little bit proud but what was most noticeable was his glow. What the f**k happened?

"I know baby girl, that I've been avoiding you for some time lately," he said, putting his arms on my shoulders. "But I have my reasons," he continued, "You know you are my baby girl, my best friend, and my person to rely on." He looked me in the eyes, and I couldn't help but gulp again.

He was breaking up with me. He was leaving me.

"Shit!" He cursed, taking his hands from my shoulders to run them nervously through his hair and turning his back to me.

I stood still; frozen and afraid. A sudden sense of déjà vu hit me. The whole scene felt familiar. Where had I felt this before? Suddenly, the memory of my dream appeared in front of my eyes. Rejection. That's what the familiar sensation was. All the blood drained from my face, my heart dropped to my stomach, and my legs started to shake. This was it, the end. Another one was leaving me. I lost my mate. Now I was losing my best friend.

I cleared my dry throat, put my hand on the back of his shoulder, and whispered, "Tell me what is wrong?"

He let out a huge gush of air and turned around. Putting his hands in his pants pockets, he opened his mouth.

"I found my mate."