

Never again by Malgorzata Uchto

Chapter 5

5. Second chance mate

Mandy's POV

Il woke up late today after spending most of the night trying to find a solution for Ryan's problem. I swear sometimes he is worse than a baby to deal with. Hopefully my rescue plan for him will do. Once again, one of his ex-flings showed up and threatened to expose their sex tape. Where does he find them? And why would he let them record? I contacted Officer Mitchell who was dealing with our latest 'madly, deeply and insanely in love' psycho and asked for his help. He assured me that he would deal with the situation. I hoped so.

I decided to spend this day all by myself, preferably reading some book I never had time for. Blake would probably spend all day with his father, which is understandable. They haven't seen each other in a long time and Peter is totally engrossed in preparation for his joining ceremony, helping Ben to find a good reason for Alpha Jones to let me attend it. So today, it's just me.

I was sitting on the couch with a book and another cup of coffee when an excited Blake ran into the cabin screaming loudly.

"He's back, my Daddy's back!" he exclaimed and jumped on the sofa, colliding with me. My book flew at the floor while I caught Blake to steady him.

"Easy honey, you might hurt yourself if you won't watch out" I lectured him, giggling. Seeing his lit-up face made me happy too. He hugged me and kissed my cheek in greeting.

"Ok, ok. I get it, you're happy your dad is back, but what are you doing here?" I asked him, knitting my eyebrows in confusion. He should be spending time with

his father, not me. He stood up immediately and composed himself before answering.

“He wants to meet you and thank you for taking care of me.” he said, fidgeting with his fingers nervously. Ok, why was he nervous?

“I’d love to meet your dad honey, let me change and we can go to him together.” I answered, looking at my outfit of the day: fluffy black socks, blue sleeping shorts and black worn-out t-shirt, my hair in a messy bun and today I wore my glasses because I lost my contact lenses. I would need to hit the pharmacy later.

“Actually, he’s outside.” he whispered but I heard him.

What!! I look like a mess, and he is just outside waiting? I guess I have no time to change, great. Nice first impression. Sighing in defeat, I simply nodded my head at him, and he ran to get his father. At least I don’t stink. Taking a big calming breath, I prepared myself for the meeting, standing at attention in the middle of the living room, eyes focused on the door.

When Blake’s light footsteps sounded on the porch followed by heavy ones, my heartbeat increased. This is it.

The door finally opened, and they came in. I froze. Blake forgotten; all my attention was on the huge guy behind him. He was gorgeous, no, not gorgeous, divine – yes that’s the word. He halted his steps just when he crossed the doormat. He stood with his hands in the pockets of his jeans. His face was expressionless, but I could feel his dominance radiating from him like an aura.

I slowly checked him out. Long muscular legs, six pack abs evident through his tight black shirt, well-built chest, broad shoulders, and huge biceps covered in ink. My throat was dry, butterflies erupted in my stomach and my heartbeat increased even more. Finally, I looked at his face. He was easily the most handsome man I had ever seen. Strong jaw covered in dark short stubble around full kissable lips. I realized that my panties were wet, but I was too shocked to care. He had a straight nose and long dark hair combed into a manly bun. I wanted to run my fingers through that hair.

I gulped and looked into his eyes, they were green; a little darker than Blake's but still mesmerizing, pulling me in. The attraction I felt was something out of this world, I wanted to jump at him and kiss the shit out of him, never letting him go. Oh my God, is this what I think it is? It's been five years since I felt the similar feeling but this time it's so much stronger. Is he my second chance mate? I tried to compose myself and offered my shaking hand in greeting and introduced myself.

"Hello Alpha, I'm Amanda Anderson, it's a pleasure to finally meet you." I said, trying to sound confident but failed, I sounded like a teenage girl talking to her crush.

He hesitated for a moment but accepted my hand and squeezed a little too hard, that I had to bite my lower lip to not hiss in pain. What's his problem? But the instant sparks that ran through my arm confirmed my thoughts and my eyes widened in shock, but he still looked unaffected like he didn't feel it. I quickly retrieved my hand from his grip and decided to not let him intimidate me. Never again. I remembered my vow.

He looked surprised that I didn't melt into a puddle with his looks but also composed himself and answered me in a deep, sexy voice, "I'm Alpha Ethan Jones, the pleasure's all mine." He didn't sound pleased.

Acting like nothing happened, I turned my attention to Blake, finally noticing him. He was gawking at us confused, not understanding what was going on.

"Blake, can I talk to your Daddy alone?" I asked with a little smile, hoping he wouldn't notice the awkward situation.

"Ok, I'll be waiting outside." he agreed and ran out of the cabin.

My eyes followed him and when I thought it was safe, I opened my mouth to speak, but was rudely interrupted by my mate's hand, so I shut my mouth, preparing for another rejection.

"If you think I don't know what you're planning, you're wrong." he said in his low voice, stepping forward threateningly. I gulped. "Stay the f**k away from me and definitely away from my son!" he growled, standing so close that our bodies almost touched, the heat radiating from his body made me fight the need to touch him. I tilted my head up, took one step away from him and huffed, crossing my arms under my chest. His eyes darkened with lust but quickly turned angry again.

"Listen Alpha, I don't care what you think about me but don't tell me what to do." I said bluntly, getting a little angry. "If Blake wants to spend time with me, I'll do it but unless he says that I need to stay away, you have nothing to say!" I hissed, making him startled. Guess he didn't expect that. I smiled internally.

"And now if you'll excuse me, I have work to do, so please leave. You know where the door is." I sent him my best sweet smile, turned on my heels and went inside the bedroom, leaving him stunned.

I didn't want to be with him any minute longer. Closing the door, I put a hand over my mouth to suppress my cries. The tears gathered in my eyes, and I slowly let them fall. My heart plummeted and darkness consumed me. Again. 'Never again, do not let the mate bond trick you!' I said to myself. I heard a low growl and the sound of the door shutting. He left.

I slowly slid down the closed door of my bedroom and let myself break down. Another rejection. Am I really that bad? Although he didn't say the words, I knew it was inevitable. I just need to be ready for it. I'm strong, a fighter, I've been through worse and survived, I'll survive this too. Tired. I crawled into the bed, put the blanket over my head and cried myself to sleep. Tomorrow's gonna be better.

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"How are you doing?" Peter asked as he helped me with dinner.

It had been three days since my breakdown; three days since I saw Blake or that arrogant Alpha. I guess he forbade him to visit me. I was seriously thinking about leaving this place but decided against it. He might think I surrendered. I will not

give him that satisfaction. Today, I invited Peter and Ben for dinner to celebrate their joining ceremony tomorrow. I'm not invited, stupid Alpha jerk. But we'll celebrate today.

"I'm fine, a little tired with all the work Ryan asked me to do, but I'm almost done so I'll be good." I lied, cutting the onions. He went to the fridge and took out the steaks to be grilled.

"I'm sorry you can't come tomorrow, it would mean a lot to me, but you know the rules." he said apologetically, looking sad.

Sighing, I put my hand on his shoulder reassuringly and tried to lift up his mood. "It's ok Peter, I understand. Besides we have this dinner today and I was thinking... tomorrow is Friday, how about we go dancing on Saturday?" I offered with a smile, and he looked interested.

"Just you, Ben and me. Hmm? What do you say?" I added, putting all the vegetables to the bowl.

"I think we can," he answered, taking the steaks outside and firing up the barbecue. Sometime later, when the food was almost done, Ben appeared on the patio, smiling like he won the lottery, bringing 2 bottles of wine. Something good must have happened.

"I've got news!" he exclaimed, excited. Me and Peter just stood patiently for him to continue.

Putting the bottles at the table he began. "Sooo..." he paused dramatically "I talked with the Alpha again." He looked at me. Dear God, what was it this time?

"And he allowed you to come for tomorrow's ceremony!" he announced with a smile, clearly satisfied with bringing good news. Peter shouted out yes! and immediately hugged Ben, thanking him repeatedly. I was standing shocked. Is he serious, where's the catch?

“...but only for the ceremony, you can’t attend the after party, and need to stay unnoticed.” he added apologetically.

So that’s the catch, but it’s ok, at least I’ll see the most important thing and maybe see Blake again. I miss him. I smiled in appreciation, and we sat down to enjoy our dinner. We talked about Saturday and Ben agreed with the plan. We spent the evening laughing and joking about everything. I finally felt good and forgot about that arrogant yet so goddamn sexy Alpha and relaxed.

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The next day came so fast and the ceremony was in one hour. I was informed that some omega would come to get me and escort me to the gathering. I think her name was Aria. I decided to wear my blue long sleeved dress with a little cleavage. I paired my outfit with light beige stilettos. My hair was down and my makeup minimal.

When I heard the knock, I picked my phone and went to greet the person outside. Opening the door, I was met with a beautiful girl, with blond hair braided at one side, dressed in a simple peach summer dress with black flats. She was my height, but she was avoiding my eyes.

“Hello Miss Anderson, my name is Aria Spencer and I’m here to escort you to the ceremony.” she said shyly.

“Just call me Mandy, it’s nice to meet you Aria. Can you look at me?” I asked delicately to not make her more nervous. She hesitated but obeyed. Her eyes were bluish green, so beautiful. I smiled at her and complimented her eyes. She blushed and started to walk. I followed.

“Your dress is amazing; it compliments your eyes,” I said truthfully, trying to make conversation.

“Thank you, but yours is gorgeous,” she replied. We made small talk about fashion she’s interested in, and she informed me about the ceremony. Apparently, I’ll be standing in the back of the ballroom to make myself unnoticed. Stupid jerk. Me, the ‘tallest’ person in the world at the back of the crowd? We’ll see about that.

When we entered the ballroom, people were already gathered and as I expected, they blocked my view. Not giving up, I looked around and spotted chairs nearby. I wasted no time. I picked up two chairs and brought them to Aria.

“What are you doing? He will punish you!” she whisper-yelled nervously, looking at the crowd. Some people turned their heads and gave us curious looks, but I simply smiled and mouthed, “I’m too short.” Some smiled, some raised their eyebrows. Ignoring them, I placed the chairs on the floor and stood up on mine, ushering Aria to do the same. She checked the crowd and seeing nobody looking, she copied my action. That’s better, now I can see everything. Aria looked a little nervous, so I squeezed her hand and we waited.

Finally, ‘Almighty’ (that’s a perfect nickname) went to the stage and stood in the middle in all his glory. God, why does he have to be this sexy? He was wearing a black fitted suit, a white button-down shirt with a black tie and black polished shoes, his hair combed to the back. A mouthwatering view. Clearing his throat, he began.

“Good evening, everyone, thank you for coming for today’s event. We have gained a new member to our pack, which all of you already know is mated to our Beta. Peter Collins, please join me” he looked to the left and then I saw him. Wearing his dark blue suit with white shirt and dark blue tie, he looked perfect. His auburn hair was styled in a messy way. He was nervous, but he walked confidently and stopped next to the Alpha. He scanned the crowd with his eyes and when he found mine, he visibly relaxed, I sent him a reassuring smile. Alpha followed his gaze and when he saw me the irritation was evident, but then he quickly faced Peter. Taking the knife from a table I didn’t notice before, he cut the insides of their hands and joined them together, it looked like a handshake.

“Peter Collins, do you accept this pack as your own and promise to protect it with your life?” Almighty asked.

"I do," Peter answered proudly.

"Do you accept me as your Alpha and swear your loyalty?"

"I do," Peter repeated.

"Do you swear to fulfill your duties as Beta and respect and protect your Alpha and the members of your pack?" Alpha asked loudly, I guess for me to hear.

"I do." Peter almost smiled at that but composed himself.

"Welcome to the pack, Beta Collins" he said finally and released his hand. The crowd cheered, I heard some whistles and howls of joy. I simply clapped my hands vigorously and shouted, "I'm proud of you!". I was so happy and excited, I didn't notice people looking at me and Aria nudged me with her elbow, already standing on the floor, I just ignored her, all I saw was Peter's beaming face.

When people started to leave, I stepped down from the chair and followed Aria. I stopped her when we were about a dozen feet from the building and asked her to mind link Peter. I couldn't leave without congratulating him personally. She hesitated for a moment but then her eyes turned blank, and I knew she did what I asked.

Suddenly strong arms circled my waist and the person spun me around, laughing at my scream of surprise. When my feet touched the ground, I turned around and hugged him instantly. Peter hugged me back and we laughed together. I congratulated him and we made small talk about the ceremony. Minutes later, Ben approached us with 'Almighty' right behind him. Ben put his arm around Peter's waist and brought him closer kissing his cheek and smiling, making him blush. I giggled.

"Well, I think I'll take my leave now, enjoy the party guys, congratulations once again!" I said and kissed their cheeks. I noticed then that Aria already left.

"Congratulations Alpha," I turned my attention to him. "You couldn't find anyone better for second Beta than Peter." I praised my best friend and the Alpha simply nodded.

"Ok guys have fun, see you tomorrow." I said and they took their leave holding hands, I was about to turn and go when I was abruptly stopped by a hand gripping my wrist. The sparks told me who did it. Turning my head his way, I looked at him.

"What the f**k were you thinking?" he hissed, "I said unnoticed, are you that stupid?" he added.

"Well, Alpha," I said calmly "For your information, when I want something, I go for it. I haven't failed yet, and don't plan to anytime soon." I said and turned away, trying to release my hand but he only pulled me harshly back so that I hit his chest. He put a hand at the small of my back and lowered his head to my ear, lips dangerously close to my ear, making me shiver.

"And what do you want now?" he asked huskily brushing his lips against my ear, I lost my voice.

"I want..." I couldn't form a coherent sentence. He trailed his nose against my neck. "I want..." He gently kissed me under my ear, smirking. I instantly pulled out of my daze and pushed him away, startling him.

"I want you to leave me the f**k alone!" I huffed in anger and walked away.

Reaching my destination, I shut the door forcefully and screamed in frustration. How stupid of me! I let him surprise me. Angry at myself, I went to the bathroom to take a shower, then jumped into my bed. I growled and forced myself to sleep.

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"Are you ready?" Peter's impatient voice followed the knock on my bathroom door. It was Saturday night, and we were heading to the club. Putting on my lip gloss, I checked myself in the mirror. Satisfied with my look, I went out and posed for Peter. I was wearing black high-waisted jeans paired with white fitted top and my black stilettos. My hair was put into a high ponytail, and I wore minimal make-up, as usual.

"Wow baby girl, I think we'll need to protect you from all the horny dogs!" he announced while Ben whistled. I reached for my leather jacket and put it on.

"Damn, I feel sorry for all the girls trying to flirt with both of you!" I exclaimed, pointing a forefinger at them. They looked drop dead gorgeous in their black fitted jeans and black sneakers the only difference was their shirts. Although they fitted their bodies like gloves, showing their muscular bodies, Peter chose white while Ben was wearing black, making him look like a dangerous bad boy.

"Sexy as f**k, I'm a lucky one tonight" I smirked at them, and they laughed. They grabbed their jackets, and we exited the cabin.

The line to the club was long and I sighed, knowing it'll take time to go in but Ben led us directly to the entrance and we entered the club without a problem. The music instantly made my body want to move and I started to sway. Ben took my hand and led us to the VIP room saying he knows the owner. When we arrived at our booth we sat down and the waitress immediately brought a bottle of vodka but I asked for water, making her frown.

I'm the driver, baby.

Almost an hour later we hit the dance floor. My body moved on its own, swaying to the beat. A pair of arms circled my waist and brought me back to the hard chest, the bulge in his pants showing his interest. I quickly turned around and put my hands on his chest, stopping the intruder. He was handsome but not divine, so I excused myself, but he pulled me closer. Trying to break free, I almost kneed him in the balls but was thankfully released from his grip by a pissed Ben. Walking away, I decided to go to the bathroom and release my bladder. Finishing my business, I washed my hands and went out.

While I was passing by the office door, I felt an arm circling my waist and one covering my mouth, the instant sparks told me who it was. Dragging me inside the office, he shut the door with his foot and pinned me against it holding my wrists at both sides of my head. He lowered his head to the crook of my neck and inhaled my scent.

“Why the f**k do I smell him on you?!” he said displeased, tightening his hold. My breath quickened “Answer me!” he roared in my neck, and I sobered up from my daze, immediately pushing him away.

“This is none of your business!” I seethed in anger, crossing my arms under my chest, his eyes focused on my breasts.

“You are f*****g MINE!” he growled, putting an arm around my waist and pulling me possessively to his body, claiming me.

“NO!” I shouted and pushed him away again. “You said loud and clear ‘stay the f**k away from me’ so you have no rights to be territorial.” I stated. “Let’s make it quick, just reject me and I’ll be gone.” I added confidently, but internally my heart hurt. His eyes widened in realization, but he masked it with a smirk. Putting his hands into the pant pockets he tilted his head at me.

“So, you know?”

“That we’re mates? Yeah, I do. I’m not stupid,” Tilting my head, I gestured for him to continue, “So go ahead, let’s get this over with.” I challenged him.

“If you insist...” he answered smugly, and I held my breath ready for his next words.

“I, Alpha Ethan Jones reject...” he trailed off, seeing my unaffected posture but my eyes definitely showed hurt, and he saw it. Urging him with a hand gesture, I waited for the impact, but his next move took me off guard.

"f**k it!" he exclaimed, and took a long predatory step my way, putting his left hand at the back of my head and smashed his lips to mine in a demanding kiss. I was shocked for a moment, but then he bit my lower lip, and I opened my mouth, letting his tongue explore the inside of my mouth. The sparks exploded and I moaned into his mouth making him growl in appreciation.

My brain was in a frenzy, heart palpitating, my hands automatically went to his hair, tugging at the back of his head to pull him closer. Our bodies collided and the butterflies erupted in my stomach, making my knees weak. He lifted me up, grabbing my thighs and pinned me to the door. I circled my legs around his waist, our tongues still locked in the sensual dance, fighting for dominance which he won. Sensing I was out of breath, he left my lips and started kissing my jaw, trailing down to my ear and when he bit my earlobe, I arched my back and moaned again. His right hand reached my left breast and he squeezed it lightly, sliding his thumb over my hard n****e, making my panties wetter. He thrust his hips forward, meeting my already soaked core and I screamed against his lips in excitement. He slipped his hand under my shirt reaching into my bra when a sudden knock at the door interrupted our make out session.

He detached our lips and breathing heavily, put me down on the floor. I steadied myself and my hand went to my swollen lips, smiling to myself, but seeing his reaction brought me back down to earth. He turned away and tugged his hair in frustration. When he finally looked at me, I saw the regret in his eyes that broke my heart. Fixing myself, I reached for the doorknob, deciding to make it easier for him. I looked over my shoulder and saw his confusion.

"That was a mistake. Goodbye, Alpha." I said coldly and opening the door I saw a stunning brunette with a seductive smile, I knew exactly her purpose was for coming here. Brokenhearted again, I left his office, hearing in the distance,

"Hi baby, I missed you."