

Healing the Rogue Alpha by Anna Kendra Chapter 10

Flora's P.O.V

"Mate."

Shocked gasps and whispers sounded from all around me but it felt like everything was so very far away.

Did I hear him right? Are my ears ringing?

But when I looked up into topaz eyes, I could see the shock and realization there as well. Andre was looking at me with his eyes wide, pupils' dilated as the others in the room looked at us in wonder.

Mate?

Mate...

The word, the concept...it all felt foreign...like I was hearing them for the first time. I had found my mate, right? Andre Saltzman...the general of the new recruit army...was my mate...

But didn't I feel anything?

"What is your name, My Lady?" Andre came forward, almost invading my personal space before I hastily took a step back.

The action made him and quite a few others frown but he didn't comment. Instead he waited patiently for my answer.

"My name is Flora." I told him, my voice almost a whisper.

A smile lit up Andre's face as he took my hand in his and brought it to his lips, placing a gentle kiss on the back of my hand. If anything, it made me feel uneasy standing so close to him, so I hastily removed my hand and clenched my dress tightly.

"Don't be shy, Flora. We are mates!" His voice was loud enough so that the entire hall could hear him and it made me even more uncomfortable.

Mates...the word sounded foreign, even in my mind.

"Flora?" Andre frowned when his excitement wasn't reciprocated.

"I'm sorry...I...I..." What was I supposed to tell him? That I didn't feel anything?

What should I do? I thought to myself as I desperately looked around for help, only to find all eyes on me, eagerly waiting for my reaction.

I felt my hands and feet go numb from fear as a cold fist squeezed my heart. But why was I scared? What was I supposed to say to him? Why was everyone staring? WHY DIDN'T I FEEL ANYTHING!

"Andre." Malachi and Ezra came to stand on either side of me, as if sensing my peril.

Ezra wrapped an arm around me, providing me instant comfort. I held on to her for dear life and Andre watched the exchange with a deepening frown. Malachi came to stand in front of me immediately, shielding me from Andre's gaze.

"What's wrong? I didn't harm her!" Andre told Malachi, defending himself immediately. "It's...I may have been too elated. She's my mate! I've finally found her after half a century of searching! Shouldn't it be a happy event?"

"Yes, it would've been, if Flora had reciprocated your feelings." Malachi put his hand on his shoulder. "Flora has been through a lot these last couple of years. She lost her memory two years ago as a result of a rogue attack and we found her unconscious in the forest. Her life hasn't been the same ever since. She was also the one to witness a traumatizing attack just yesterday where one of the soldiers guarding her was killed by a rogue and another brutally injured. I wouldn't be surprised if she isn't feeling the mating bond. Give her some time...let her mind heal."

Andre was quiet for the longest time, as if absorbing the news. But I couldn't take it anymore.

"Please excuse me." I murmured under my breath and then I was running out the room, down the corridor and outside into open air.

I kept on running where my feet took me and soon, I found my bones began to ache. I didn't care about changing or any other factors. I simply let my wolf take over.

A blinding light and the pleasure-pain of my bones shifting, my organs rearranging as I fell on all fours and began running as fast as I could. I didn't know where I was going until I reached the backyard garden behind the Lindersay castle. It was a wide stretch of land where us wolves could go for a run without fear of being attacked by rogues. This stretch was inside the castle walls, surrounded by a fifteen feet of boundary walls and with lampposts at regular intervals to lead the way. Not that wolves needed the light, but it gave us reassurance that we were not alone and we could always find our way back home.

There were large trees planted all over the stretch, along with some rare medicinal plants that couldn't be found elsewhere. Unfortunately, not all plants

could be grown in this soil and we had to depend on the surrounding forest for most of our resources.

I zapped through the trees at full speed, trying to tire my body while my mind raced. I knew I was thinking about the surrounding and the scenery to distract myself from thinking about the obvious.

Mate...mate...mate...

The idea, the concept...everything felt foreign...felt wrong!

What was wrong with me? Andre Saltzman was my mate...my other half. A partner chosen for me by the great Moon Goddess herself! Then why didn't I feel anything? Why didn't I feel the bond?

Andre was over fifty years of age; that's why he had been able to sense me. Then why couldn't I sense anything? The mating bond required only the male to be over twenty eight to activate...but even now, my wolf was quiet, it's mind confused and worried. There was absolutely no trace of a mate in my mind.

What was wrong with me?

Suddenly, my legs gave out from under me and I skidded on the ground, coming to a stop inches away from a large eucalyptus tree.

I had no recollection of how long I had been running or what time it was, but I felt completely exhausted...emotionally and physically drained.

I didn't understand what was wrong with me, only that it was getting increasingly difficult to get up. Did I injure myself somehow? I didn't know.

All I knew was that I couldn't keep my eyes open anymore...

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You and me...it's bound to happen, Flora. I can scent it all around me...you want me, just as much as I want you.

I don't want you to bow to me. Not you. Never you. I'll make sure of that.

I don't care who the Gods have chosen for me, but I'll defy them all to be with you. Remember that, Flora.

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I woke up with a start, immediately regretting it as my head began to pound, so much so that a gasp of pain left my lips as I brought my hands up to clutch my head.

“Oh dear!” Someone spoke from beside me. “Mercy! Help her!”

Cool hands on mine, prying them from my head and then...sweet, sweet relief.

I didn't realize that I had been breathing heavily until I felt someone place a hand over my chest to calm me. When I opened my eyes, I met Ezra's crystalline blue orbs. Her smile gave me instant comfort and I got up from my bed and wrapped my arms around her for comfort.

“Thank you for your help, Mercy.” Ezra spoke to the healer as her arms came around me. “I'll call if I need your help.”

I didn't see Mercy leave but I heard the soft click of the door when she left. Ezra continued to hold me, to pat my back lightly as I felt myself clutching onto her even more for comfort. I didn't remember my mother, but was she as comforting, as gentle as Ezra? Had Ezra been my mother in another life, another time?

I didn't know the answer to that, but all I knew was that she had been my mother from the first day I opened my eyes in Lindersay.

“Are you alright, love?” Ezra asked in her calming voice.

“Yes.” I moved away from Ezra. “What happened?”

“Some soldiers found you unconscious at the backyard.” Ezra patted my hair lightly before handing me a glass of herb juice. “Mercy made that for you-no, no! Do not make that face! You passed out due to lack of sleep and stress. It's good for you-that's right-all of it!”

After I had drunk all of the god awful bitter liquid, Ezra took the glass away from me. But before I could talk to her any further, a shot rang in the air, startling us both.

“What was that?” I asked, alarmed as two more shots were fired.

“That's Andre and his troops.” Ezra frowned. “They were supposed to scare away the rogues from the perimeter. He asked Malachi for permission too, but...”

Two more shots and both Ezra and I were sprinting out the door, to the closest tower overlooking the forest ahead. It took me longer to reach the top as I was limping slightly, but when I reached the top, what greeted me wasn't a troop trying to simply scare away rogues...but a massacre.

The smell of smoke was heavy in the air as shots kept on firing. I couldn't see Andre or his men but the light from the gunshots helped me detect their location. And then there was the stench of blood.

Pungent and metallic and horrible...as the painful wails of the rogue wolves filled the air.