

Chapter 20 Not Again

His eyes skimmed through the name on the CV beneath the ID card, and his lips spread out so he said it aloud. "Roxanne Harvey."

How? How could this even be possible? How could this be happening? He had worked - and was currently working

so hard to get her and her memories out of his mind, despite Ziko's stubbornness.

And here she was again! Strolling into his life as she deemed fit? He had not asked to look up from his car and see her attempting to strangle Peter, on the day they met. He had not asked to attend that wedding party where he found himself being drawn to her very essence. He had not asked to mark her in the most ceremonious way while having the best sex of his life.

Maybe, just maybe he had enjoyed all of it, but he had not asked for any of them.

Neither did he ask for her to appear from nowhere! And in the most conventional or unconventional- of ways.

Just who did she think she was to disappear, break him, and then reappear like his life was hers to torment?

"Mate!" Ziko growled within him.

Furious, Lancelot slapped the laptop shut. The force with which he did so made Peter wince, fearing the fate of his laptop screen.

Mate. Mate. Mate. That was all he heard Ziko cry for. Was that the only thing he knew how to say? They were supposed to be one, therefore, no matter how impossible it might seem, they had to try to forget about the silly American woman, TOGETHER.

"Oh shut up!" Lancelot yelled at Ziko, rising from the chair. When his force caused the chair to collide with the ground, Peter's eyes fell to the poor wooden object. He, himself, made sure that he stepped away from Lancelot. His boss was clearly not in a good mood.

Peter did not know how he had expected Lancelot to react, but he couldn't say he was surprised at how quickly his emotions had... gotten the better of him.

"Whatever shall we..." Peter stopped taking when Lancelot's eyes fell on his small frame.

Nervous, he coughed to clear his throat and straightened his posture.

"What will you do now sir? Given the current situation of things," he asked. He was eager to know Lancelot's next line of action.

Frankly, Lancelot did not know what he was to do. Or what he wanted to do, but he did know one thing; he had to take Ziko for the run Doctor Flinn told him about.

It was time he and Ziko began to see eye to eye on some certain issues.

Lancelot rolled up the sleeves of his shirt and stood in front of his mirror. "I'm going on a run," he said, grimly. Not even sparing Peter a glance.

"Sir, I was talking about ..."

"I would not need your company Peter. You would stay here and finish the rest of the document. I shall return whenever I shall return."

With that, Lancelot was out of his room door, even before Peter could make an affirmative statement.

After leaving his room, Lancelot ran blindly down the wooden steps. As he did, he struggled to take deep breaths, he needed to breathe, he needed to clear his thoughts; he needed to think.

When he got to the foot of the stairs, he met Ava and his mother just about to climb up.

Madeline raised her brow at her son and looked over his rough appearance.

"And where might you be off to in such a hurry... and such a mess?"

Lancelot simply spared Madeline a courtesy kiss on her cheek before brushing past her and Ava.

There were more pressing things on his mind right now, more things than Madeline cared to know.

Outside the walls of the Dankworth palace, Lancelot stood at the foot of the huge mahogany doors. It was already 6 pm by European time, the cool evening breeze washed through his skin, causing the dark hairs on his body to stand in attention to the cold sensation the breeze left behind after passing him.

Sighing, Lancelot looked around one last time. When he was sure no one was looking, he lowered his posture, placed both hands on his left knee, pushing his right leg behind him. He shook his head vehemently.

"Clear your thoughts," Doctor Flinn had said.

Right now, he would do just that.

Lancelot lowered his gaze to the ground. Doing so, he counted down from ten to one in his head. Slowly, he rose his head up to examine the area around his house. He would run out through the gates, past the manor, past the stables, past the golf course and wonder into the forest. There, he would unleash and take off with Ziko.

When he blinked for the second time, Lancelot picked up his pace and dashed out with full speed.

Run. Run. Run. He would run until his legs failed him. And even then, he would continue to run until he was sure he was brave enough to face the truth; the truth of his real feelings for her.

Somewhere above him, standing on the terrace and looking down at him, was Ava frowning. Whatever was wrong with him was surely taking his mind away from the one thing he should have been focusing on; her.

And by the goddess, she swore to find out whatever it was. Then, she would put an end to it, once and for all. When she saw him run past the gates, she scoffed and turned away. Nothing was going to hinder her from getting what she wanted, absolutely nothing.

Just as he said he would, he continued to run past the trees, the grasses, the buildings, the stables, and when he stepped foot into the outskirts of the estate, he stopped to breathe. "You can run, but you can't hide," Ziko said from within him.

Lancelot was furious. At Ziko, at himself, at her.

Why wouldn't they all just leave him in peace? He had more than enough on his plate already. Here he was, thinking about the only thing that he had ever thought of; his place as Alpha King of his pack. His coronation was in twenty-six days. He was supposed to be getting prepared, he was supposed to be getting himself ready; both physically, mentally and emotionally.

Yet, here he was. Running, running as though it could take him far away from her. Far away from his thoughts and whatever cursed emotions he was feeling right now.

She snuck into his life like a thief in the night. Stealing his peace and tranquility, threatening to make him doubt all that he had ever known.

Lancelot Dankworth was always a man who knew what he wanted and knew just how to get it. But for the first time in his life, he was confused.

Lancelot looked around the vast expanse of land and extremely tall trees. When he had taken in enough of the scenery, he dashed on his heels again. Picking up and doubling his speed as he ran deeper into the forest.

"Why do you pretend as though I'm the only one who wants her?"

"Ziko. Not now. Please." Frustrated, Lancelot tried to plead with his wolf.

Ziko's speech wasn't helping matters, at all.

"I am not just drawn to her because she is my mate...our mate."

"Then why else do you want her for fucks sake?!" Lancelot screamed. Ziko was exhausting him. Between running and yelling at him, Lancelot barely had time to breathe.

Ziko stayed silent. Lancelot was relieved. But, just when he thought he had silenced his wolf, Ziko spoke up again.

"Because somewhere in you, you know you do too. I might have a soul of my own, but I am also a part of you. A part of you that is connected to your desires. You don't want her because I want her, I want her because you want her." "That's ridiculous..." He was still running.

"You're a wolf. You found and marked your mate, you cannot forget that. There isn't a world in which you can put her memories behind you, but I can..." He stopped talking to shake his head. "And I will."

"You won't Lance." Ziko was now as definite as Lancelot normally was. It was the one thing Lancelot and his wolf had in common; when they wanted something, they got it, no matter the cost. "I won't let you," Ziko continued.

"You do not understand the situation I am here, do you?! You just mark whoever you want and I am supposed to bear the consequences!"

"Whatever are you yelling for, Lance? I only marked her, because she was my mate!" Ziko was growing angry within him. The two males were currently infuriating each other.

"And I'm the one who has to stand before my family and tell them that!"

"Ahah!" Ziko sounded faintly amused this time. It angered Lancelot all the more.

"So that is your fear? Your family? Your mother?"

"I fear no one," Lancelot snapped back. He heard Ziko growl within him.

"You could have fooled me."

"Why are we even discussing this? I shall speak about this topic no longer than I already have," Lancelot spoke and wished he could believe it.

Closing his eyes, Lancelot picked up his pace and ran further into the forest. Faster, quicker, swifter, he became every second, until Ziko howled within him and conquered his human form with his wolf form. Even on four legs, his pace did not reduce, until he had run out of breath.

As Ziko slowed down, falling to the ground, Lancelot's human form returned, his body face to face with the grass.

The run was thrilling, exciting. Ziko had frustrated him for most of it, still lying down on one of nature's finest achievements-grass- he couldn't help but chuckle.

Doctor Flinn was right. Now that he had worn himself out by running, it did seem as though his thoughts were... Clearer.

Although, Lancelot knew that the moment Ziko opened his mouth to speak, everything would change.

But now, Lancelot felt like he knew just what to do. After the brawl with Ziko, he had come to understand that he and wolf had one thing in common; they could not find it within them to stay away from her. The

crazy American who had managed to shake his high walls. The walls he had spent fourteen years of his life building around himself.

When he found the strength to rise up again, he took slow strides back to the palace, even though it took him one long hour to do so.

When he walked past the gates and made his way to the palace door, he found Peter there, pacing about with a worried look on his face. Peter rose up his eyes to search for his boss again. When their eyes met, he heaved a sigh of relief as he walked swiftly towards him. "Sir..."

"Book us the first flight that leaves for New York tomorrow."

Peter was visibly taken aback.

"Sir?"

Lancelot's eyes acknowledged his presence for the first time since he walked up to him.

"Need I repeat myself?"

Peter swallowed hard and shook his head vehemently.

"No sire, but..."

"Very well then, a goodnight to you as well Peter."

With that, Lancelot walked into the palace, leaving a smiling Peter behind him.