

Mated to the Alpha twins novel by Jane Doe chapter 36

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Thalia had been silent up until we reached the bus terminal. I found myself staring at the brightly lit board, times and dates flashing through my mind. I walked over to the clerk; I pulled a couple bills from my bag. I couldn't help my wandering gaze, my eyes flickering towards the multitude of camera's in the bus terminal.

It was a silly thought, one driven by paranoia and fear. What if they managed to find me? Melissa and Frank were useless and would spare no effort searching for me, it was Garrett I worried about. From the look of his crisp suit and his large house, it was obvious he was wealthy. Would Garrett put forth the effort and money into finding me? I wasn't sure.

I had to pay extra for the soonest bus to Atlanta, Ga. It would take three hours to get to Atlanta, thankfully there were no stops involved. Anxiety and paranoia clung to me along with the crisp nighttime air. My foot tapped relentlessly; my eyes locked on the clock ticking away in the terminal. I had discarded my old flip phone at the corner store before stepping into the cab, another precaution I decided to take.

Thalia had been quiet the entire time, only speaking up as the bus pulled into the terminal.

'Don't do this, Aurora.' Thalia pleaded, her voice as stressed and nervous as my own. 'I know why you want to leave; I understand. I'm telling you it's the wrong choice.'

'I want to find that out for myself.' I grimaced, 'I never had a choice, not with anything. If this is a mistake, I'll find out on my own.'

‘I won’t help you do this, Aurora.’ Thalia’s voice sounded tired and sad, almost making me regret my decision. ‘You’ll be on your own.’

‘I’ve always been on my own.’ I murmured, walking over to the coach bus. The smell of cleaner and air freshener filled my nose. ‘It’s time I make my own decisions.’

Thalia went silent, and I couldn’t help but feel as though I had lost a part of myself. The silence was deafening. It was then I realized how much I had gotten used to her voice, even in the short days I had known her.

“You’re doing the right thing.” I murmured to myself, stepping onto the near empty bus. “I’ll learn from my mistakes like anyone else. At least I finally had the freedom to choose.”

My stomach was doing flips as I walked down the narrow aisles of the bus. Only a few people lingered, clearly impatient for departure. I sat down in one of the empty seats, placing my duffle bag at my feet. My fingers twitched impatiently, the hairs on my arms raising. Fear and anxiety had become my closest companions this past week. They followed me around, their silky voices hissing in my ears.

I could feel the handle of the seat crunch beneath my death grip. I only released my grip as the bus pulled out of the terminal, and headed towards the highway. I purposefully averted my eyes, ignoring the large crack I had caused on the handle.

Three hours, three hours of nothing but silence. Dull music played through the speakers of the bus. My cheek pressed against the cool window of the bus, a poor attempt at stilling my nerves. Just as my eyes began to close and sleep began to take me, a noise close by startled me.

Walking down the narrow isle was a young-looking guy, one whose dark eyes were locked on my own. His hands brushed against the scratchy material of each seat until he reached the one I currently occupied.

A slew of thoughts ran through my mind, all driven by paranoia. Did Garrett send this guy? Did he know I had left? Did Kady tell what she saw?

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“Of course not.” I thought to myself dryly, “It hasn’t even been an hour. They probably think I’m asleep.”

The guy stopped once he reached my seat, his dark eyes looking down on me. The guy was good looking in a rugged sort of way. His hair was a light shade of brown, wavy and just barely grazing his broad shoulders. Normally a guy like this would send a rush of butterflies swarming through me, but I felt nothing. Only two faces popped into mind. Identical features, full lips, long lashes, sharp jawlines. This guy had nothing on Alec and Kade. With great force, I willed the two of them from my mind and ignored the sharp pain that ran through my chest. Thinking of them would only cause me unneeded pain.

“Mind if I sit here?” The guy grinned softly, showing just a hint of his blinding smile.

“Sure.” I mumbled, unsure if he was able to hear me.

The guy sat in the seat beside me, cramming his bookbag between his legs. Whatever kind of cologne he was wearing swirled around me, filling my nose. It was a pleasant smell, woody with a hint of something sweet. Another sharp pain rattled me, reminding me I had smelled better.

“I’ve been on this bus for four hours now.” The guy chuckled, giving a tired shake of his head. I watched from the corner of my eye as his wavy hair shook and tickled against his shoulders. “You seem like you could use some company.”

“Where are you coming from?” I found myself asking, purely to get my mind off of everything else. My voice was stronger than I expected it to be. While I felt weak inside, my voice conveyed not an ounce of fear or worry.

“Florida.” The guy chuckled. It was then I noticed his tanned skin, gold and kissed by the sun. “It’s been a long ride. Hell, I still got more to go. Where are you headed to?”

“I’m not sure yet.” I chuckled dryly, “I’m still figuring that bit out.”

“You look a little young to be riding the bus by yourself.” The guy smirked; his chocolate eyes playful.

“I’m nineteen if that makes you feel better.” I shrugged, the lie leaving my lips effortlessly. Lying had become something I was good at.

Liar, liar, liar.

The word rang out in my head, filling my stomach with guilt.

“I’m just messing with you, but I do feel a little better.” The guy chuckled, flashing me a million-watt smile. A smile like that would’ve sent blush rushing to my face, instead it had no effect.

“What brings you all the way from Florida?” I found myself asking. Part of me felt guilty for talking to this guy. I could’ve cared less who he was, or what brought him here. All I wanted was a distraction, something to keep me from drowning in my own anxiety.

“Visiting my Mom. My Dad’s sick and she needed my help.” The guy shrugged, his lips twitching into a frown. “I’m taking the year off from college anyway, so I don’t mind lending a hand.”

“I’m sorry about that.” I nearly cringed at how insincere I sounded, my words coming out clipped and hard. “Do you like Florida?”

“Oh, I love it. The heat, the sun, the ocean. The storms are a downer, but you can’t have everything.” The guy shrugged, giving a chuckle. It seems he hadn’t noticed my insincerity, or he hadn’t cared to point it out.

“I’ve never been to the ocean before.” I murmured thoughtfully, wondering if I could catch a flight somewhere near the ocean. Even living in California for most of my life, I had never stepped foot on a beach. When I lived with my Grandma, we were too far from the ocean to make the long drive. I had never thought about it until now.

“Never been to the ocean?” The guy scoffed, his hand over his heart as though I had personally offended him. “Have you lived in Georgia your entire life? There’s beaches in Georgia.”

“I used to live in California, never had the chance to go to the beach.” I chuckled dryly.

“Have you thought about heading back to California?” The guy asked, his brown eyes pooling with curiosity and sincerity.

“I actually haven’t.” I shrugged, “It’s a long trip, and there’s too many memories there.”

What I didn’t mention was that if anyone looked for me, California would be the first place they would look. Melissa wouldn’t hesitate to tell Garrett I used to live in California. California was too obvious. I wanted

to live somewhere no one knew my name. California is a huge state, but it wasn't what I was looking for.

"I understand that." The guy nodded, and I believed him. His eyes held a shadow within them, one that felt oddly familiar. "My name's Justin by the way."

"Amber." I nodded; more lies.

Liar, liar, liar.

Another surge of guilt rushing through me, Tori's face popping into my mind. I couldn't help but wonder how long it would take for the overwhelming emotions to fade. When would my own guilt fade? When would the cruel voice in the back of my mind silence?

"Well Amber, I hope you find what you're looking for." Justin smiled, one that held a similar pain. Some small part of me wondered what ghosts haunted him, what the cruel voice in his own mind might whisper.

"I do too." I murmured, forcing my mind to part from the past and think towards the future.

Justin accompanied me all the way to Atlanta, GA. I did most of the listening as Justin talked, telling me about his life. He was heading to North Virginia, to his Mom's small ranch house. He had traveled to Florida for college, the waves calling his name. He had even participated in a couple surfing competitions, earning second place in one of them. I had learned much about Justin, yet refused to give much on myself.

Justin had asked me what hobbies I might have, making me stumble and fall into uncomfortable silence. What hobbies did I have? School, homework, working, saving money. These things were not hobbies, they

were not enjoyable. The realization was like a punch in my stomach. I had no hobbies, no passions. There was nothing I truly enjoyed doing. I never had the time or security to explore the things I cared for. Such a simple question caused such turmoil within me.

Once we reached the terminal and hopped off the cramped bus, I asked Justin to call a cab for me. After wiping away the confusion on his face, he pulled a phone from his pocket. I had lied again, claiming my phone battery had died and my charger was left at home.

Justin gave me a reassuring smile and a wave as I hopped into the cab. I returned his wave, but I couldn't force a smile to form on my face. Part of me wondered if I would ever smile again.

"Of course, I will." I scoffed to myself, the silence in the cab was deafening. "I need to feel secure and safe first, happiness will come later."

I told myself that lie up until I arrived at the Atlanta, GA airport.

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While the bus ride had been somewhat uncomfortable, Justin's presence was a welcomed distraction. Anything to keep my mind from what I was leaving behind soothed my frayed nerves.

At this time of night, there were little options on flights. My options were New York, Texas and Missouri. While New York was an intriguing option, my money would burn much faster there. The flight to Texas wasn't until the early hours of the morning. Waiting until the sun crested

the forest line and hung above the clouds wasn't an option. The wait alone would unravel me, my nerves turning me into a mess of anxiety.

Missouri it was.

I knew little about the state, but assumed the weather would be similar to Georgia. Humidity tempered with the brilliant sun, warm but not nearly as blazing as Texas or California.

I had little issue getting a plane ticket, my duffle bag serving as a carry-on item. Every dollar I spent weighed on my mind. Instead of counting each individual purchase, I pushed the number from my thoughts.

Thalia had been silent since our last conversation, buried deep in the depths of my wandering mind. I had a feeling we wouldn't talk for quite some time.

My stomach had been a mess of knots and fear up until I boarded the plane. Once the plane left the ground, I released a breath I hadn't realized I'd been holding.

Saving money where I could, I declined the offer of first class and smushed myself as close to the window as possible. The plane wasn't crowded, but nearly every seat was full.

An older woman sat beside me, her child on the far end. I leaned my head against the window, peering out into the darkness of the sky. I might have enjoyed this flight during the day. The thick clouds hanging in the sky, resembling large tufts of cotton. At night it was hard to make out the shapes of the clouds, only dim stars speckled the sky.

A war between my self-control and eyelids ensued as they began to close on their own accord. Exhaustion had been unknowingly creeping up on me since first hopping into the Taxi. The adrenaline from sneaking out of the house had long wore off. With my duffle bag tucked on the floor against the wall of the plane, I succumbed to the creeping darkness.

Perfume. That was the scent that filled my nose, followed by the light scent of laundry detergent. Floral notes mixed with the crisp scent of soap. Somehow, I found this comforting. Something soft pressed against my cheek, pressed lightly against my shoulder.

“Sweetheart, the plane’s landed.” A soft voice called out, followed by another touch to my shoulder.

All at once the events of the last few hours battered my mind. I lurched away from the older woman, the one I had been using as a pillow. With sandy blonde hair tucked neatly in a bun, small lines formed around her eyes and lips. Her deep brown eyes watched me calmly, a motherly smile on her face. The child in the seat beside her was also stirring, wiping the sleep from his small eyes.

“You seemed exhausted; I didn’t have the heart to wake you.” The blonde woman spoke, a slight southern accent to her words. Her accent was light, weaving between her words in a way that brought me a shred of comfort.

“Thanks.” I cleared my throat uncomfortably, blood undoubtedly rushing to my face. I had used this woman as a pillow for the last few hours, and she had allowed it graciously.

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I mustered up the courage to ask her for the time, stifling a yawn as she told me it was past three in the morning. I was grateful to stand from the plane, to exit into the warm Missouri air. Even at night the breeze was thick with warmth.

Even at three in the morning, Taxi's and other drivers lingered outside of the airport. Most of them leaning against their car's smoking or chatting.

While in the airport, I heard two older women chatting about a town called Higgins. I hadn't heard much, apart from how lovely of a town it was but I had already made my decision.

I found it liberating and refreshing to choose where I wanted to live on a whim, as I had never held that kind of control before. Higgins was half an hour drive from the airport. The drive was filled with silence and the dull static filled pulsing of the Taxi driver's radio.

I had asked him to drop me off at the nearest motel, one located in the center of town. The neon blue light flickered warily, ivy and vines working their way up most of the building. A rusted blue railing spanned most of the building, serving as a balcony to the guests staying.

The hotel office smelled of stale cigarettes and cheap air freshener, but this place was only a means to an end. All I needed was a few hours' sleep before I set off in search of a job, and hopefully somewhere to live.

After paying a little under a hundred dollars for three nights, I sulked up to the second floor. The withered key the employee had given me rattled against my pants as I trudged up the cement stairs. The doors to each motel room were the same deep shade of blue as the railing. Some doors looked fresh, as though they had recently been painted over.

The motel room smelled much like the hotel office, a fact I forced from my mind. While the bed smelled like someone's dust filled attic, I curled

up on it blissfully. Even with the withered springs poking my back, I felt safer than I had in a long time.

For just a moment, my heart leaped in my chest. No more Frank with his drunken rants and wandering hands. No more Melissa with her manipulations and psychological torment. No more absent Father's, talk of my future, or psychopathic ex-girlfriends.

For just a split second, before two irresistibly handsome faces popped into my mind, I was truly happy.

I had slept well into the morning, waking up to a brick of lead weighing down my stomach. I was almost positive someone had noticed my absence already. The old alarm clock on the table read 1:23p.m. I had slept well into the afternoon.

There was always a chance no one had noticed my absence. It was Saturday, and I didn't have a shift at the restaurant until much later in the day.

I wondered if I would see my face plastered on television, big bold letters saying 'Missing'. Would I become one of those horror stories they tell on television? The one where they talk of serial killers, missing women, and acts of violence.

Using the tiny bottles of shampoo and conditioner, I hopped into the rather filthy motel shower. After downing a bottle of water and two granola bars, I changed my clothes and left the motel room.

The two women at the airport had been right about this town, it was rather beautiful. New, crisp buildings lined the street, some painted bright colors. Plenty of small shops open, along with a bakery down at the corner. The smell of buttered rolls and frosting filled the air.

The air was thick and humid, the sun dazzling in the sky but it only added to the beauty. Lush trees and bushes danced throughout the town, clustered on streets and behind buildings. The center of town had that antique feel, a multitude of colorful shops lining the streets.

For once, hope filled my lungs and mixed with the lingering oxygen. Out of all these stores, one had to be willing to hire me. I wanted to use my real name as little as possible, working under the table was a preference not a necessity.

I walked down the street, breathing in the thick and humid air. I had changed my pants and dark sweatshirt into something more appropriate for the weather. A pair of shorts sat on my hips, followed with a white colored blouse. My only pair of fairly worn sandals sat on my feet.

Two hours passed and I had stopped in most of the shops, buying myself a coffee in the process. I had spent time speaking with someone in each shop, asking if they were looking for new employees. Many said no, while others asked for a phone number to reach me at. Many of their faces fell when I informed them, I didn't have a phone, a weary look crossing their face as though they get many brief travelers looking for money.

While my heart dropped with each refusal, I took my time looking through each store. A sliver of pain ran through me, Tori's face flashing to mind. She had wanted to take me shopping more than anything, insisting on buying me whatever I wanted. Part of me wished Tori were here, that she were roaming the shops by my side. With a painful sigh, I pushed those thoughts out of mind.

I had a couple shops left, but the rumbling of my stomach stopped me in my tracks. The thick scent wafting from the bakery was practically

calling my name, begging for a small fraction of the money I had brought along.

The inside of the shop matched the heavenly smell. White and a light shade of pink lined the bakery, striped padded seats at each of the booths inside. Large round cakes and small pastries sat under a thick dome of glass, some of them still steaming. Notes of frosting, cinnamon, and vanilla filled the store. The scent wafted down the street, beckoning the walking crowds.

A guy and an identical looking girl stood behind the counter, each looking determined and a little frazzled. Even from my spot beside the door, I could see the small beads of sweat that clung to their foreheads. Sandy blonde hair was plastered to their foreheads, but they continued to move as though they hadn't noticed. The sidewalks were crowded with people. I couldn't tell if everyone lived here, or if most were tourists coming from the city. A small crowd had formed in the bakery, a long line spanning the store.

Taking deep breaths of the sugary scent, I basked in the small blissful moments where I truly felt happy and continued to ignore the growing hole in my heart.

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Resisting the intense urge to purchase one of everything, I ordered myself a blueberry muffin and something called a bear claw.

I sat down at one of the shiny looking booths, the striped pink and white seats gleamed merrily. Everything in the bakery looked brand new, from the shimmering booths to the large ovens peaking over the counter.

I couldn't help but watch the duo running the counter in silence. It was clear they were related, most likely brother and sister. Each had the same shade of sandy blonde hair, the same full yet pouty lips. The girl was slim with curves in the right places, looking out of place in the bakery. I would've expected to see the girl on the cover of a magazine, not at some bakery. The two of them rushed from counter to oven, to prepping tray, to cash register. Each a whirlwind of energy and determination, as I continued watching in silence.

I had long ago finished my muffin and bear claw, wiping the sugary goodness from my fingers with a napkin. The heavy crowd eventually died down, people leaving the bakery in large clusters. Once the two siblings were no longer overwhelmed with customers, I approached the register.

“What did you need, sweetheart?” The guy turned, his eyes a startling shade of blue. For just a second, my heart leaped in my chest. The word ‘sweetheart’ bounced around in my head, only a different voice was speaking.

“I—” I stammered, losing my train of thought as the image of two handsome face's popped into memory. “Are the owners of this place hiring?”

“We are the owners girl.” The blonde girl emerged from the back, a smear of flour coating her shirt. Her cheeks were flushed from running around the bakery, yet none of her hair fell out of place.

A blush crept along my cheeks, staining my skin as I looked at the girl. They looked around my age, most likely a few years older than myself. They both seemed pretty young to own a bakery in town.

“Our parents own a few shops down the street. My sister wanted to open a bakery. At the time she couldn’t make cookies without burning them.” The guy snickered, giving his sister an amused look.

“Last I checked, you couldn’t either.” The girl poked her tongue out, flashing her brother a hard look. “Nearly burned the shop down last time you tried.”

“I’m better with the register.” The guy grinned at me, shrugging indifferently.

“I could use another baker.” The girl huffed, frowning at her brother. “You know how to bake?”

“Not at all.” I shook my head, my face burning brighter than ever. The thought of actually baking hadn’t crossed my mind. I had been lulled and seduced by the scent of sweet pastries, thinking little of what my job there would actually entail.

The girl frowned, “Give me your phone number, I’ll call you if we need another employee.”

“I actually don’t have a phone.” I chuckled ruefully. The conversation was going poorly, as many of my attempts have today. “I’m staying at the motel on the corner. I’ll be there for the next two days.”

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“The motel?” The girl frowned, wiping some of the flour from her cheek. Something flashed across her light-colored eyes, something similar to concern. “What are you doing two days from now?”

“I’m not sure.” I shrugged; my lips pressed into a tight line. “Probably stay another night if I can’t find a job.”

The girl’s full lips tugged down in a frown. Her and her brother locked eyes, having a silent conversation between the two of them.

“You already know my answer.” The guy shrugged, grabbing a rag and a bottle of spray from under the register. “If it keeps me out of that kitchen, I’m all for it.”

“Can you be here tomorrow?” The girl turned to me, her eyes wandering the planes of my face. “An hour before opening?”

“I can be here whenever you need me.” I nodded enthusiastically. The knot that had been forming in my stomach turned to butterflies, anticipation flooding through my veins.

“Be here at six. You can help me open, and I’ll have a little time to teach you the basics.” The girl nodded, a smile twitching at the corner of her lips. “I’m Beth and this is my annoying brother Jake.”

For a moment, I debated on what name to give them. Lying continued to eat a hole in my stomach, bringing me discomfort at every waking moment. Yet I couldn’t bring myself to say my actual name. The thought of being dragged back my Garrett picked at my mind.

“Amber.” I forced a smile as I looked between the two siblings.

“Well Amber, I’m not half as annoying as Beth makes me out to be.” Jake grinned, flashing a gleaming set of teeth. A smile like that would have once sent butterflies swarming in my stomach. Instead of butterflies, a strange hollow feeling had built in my chest. A cold gust of wind swirled within me, whizzing through the hole in my chest.

“Let’s hope you got some skill, Amber.” Beth shot a calm smile my way, “I don’t need another cashier. Jake’s already filled that position. If you can work hard and bake something edible, you’ll have yourself a job.”

“I’ll do my best.” I promised, a hopeful grin spreading on my face.

I enjoyed the rest of my afternoon, wandering the remaining shops in town. While a little lunch café was calling my name, I resisted the pull. I had enough money to support myself for a few weeks, but couldn’t risk draining my pool of money. I made a silent promise with myself as the smell of rich soup and melted grilled cheeses filled my nose. If I managed to secure this job at the bakery, I would take myself to the café and order whatever I wanted.

Once the sun had begun to set, I meandered back to the shady motel. The lopsided spring mattress was calling my name, the thin quilt beckoning me to curl up inside. While I had slept peacefully, two distraught faces swirled in my dreams.

It had taken me half an hour to set an alarm on the crappy alarm clock the hotel provided. I had lurched from bed at 5:30 a.m. the faces of Alec and Kade still fresh in my mind. If they hadn’t noticed my absence, they would today.

I had a shift at the restaurant later today, one I would undoubtedly miss.

I yanked myself from the motel bed, stumbling to my feet with an eager smile on my face. I hadn’t the first clue about baking, but Beth was willing to let me try. I threw on a pair of jeans and a faded t-shirt, hoping she would give me a uniform to borrow. I stuffed a granola bar into my mouth, the smell of fresh pastry still lingering in my mind.

I had shown up to the bakery fifteen minutes early, lingering out front as I fought against the crisp morning chill. The sun was beginning to rise, casting buttery light across stores and down the sidewalk. The sky was lit in hues of blue, orange and yellow.

Five minutes before six, a shiny silver car pulled up the side of the road. Beth was already in uniform, hopping from her car with purse in hand.

“Where’s your brother?” I couldn’t help but ask. I wrapped the long sleeves of my t-shirt around my fists, warming my hands.

“He’ll be here once we open.” Beth snorted, “Getting him out of bed early is miserable. We live in separate apartments and I hate having to drag him out.”

Even as she closed her car door, the smell of pastries wafted from inside. I wondered if the smell followed her wherever she went, making her smell like a freshly baked muffin at all hours of the day. I could think of worse things to smell, and wouldn’t mind carrying around the scent of thick frosting and brown sugar.

Beth unlocked the front door and flipped on the lights, the pink and white booths shining merrily.

“Jake cleaned the store last night, so we can focus on getting everything ready for the morning rush.” Beth called out over her shoulder, motioning for me to follow.

My eyes ran over every surface of the kitchen. Every shiny metal contraption fell under my gaze. The huge ovens followed by the large cooler and freezer. An assortment of piping bags sat out on the metal prep-table in the center of the room.

“I’m going to talk as we go. Follow what I do as best you can.” Beth huffed, pulling a large contained of what looked like dough from one of the many fridges. “Try your best to keep up, and if you have any questions feel free to ask.”

Pushing away the lingering faces of Alec and Kade, I followed Beth closely. The scents and sights of the bakery helped distract me, helped turn my attention from the black hole in my chest.

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Kade’s P.o.v

I should have listened to that sinking feeling in my gut when I first locked eyes with Alpha Garrett.

I should have realized why Aurora’s unique eyes were so familiar.

It was because I knew her father, Alpha Garrett exceedingly well. It was known he had a daughter, born from his mate but there had been no rumors of another child.

In the werewolf community, illegitimate children hold the same standing. An Alpha’s first born is in line for the position, regardless of the woman who carried the child.

It didn’t take long to figure out. The day Alec and I had gone to Aurora’s house, only to find Garrett standing in the doorway, arose some suspicions. The two of us knew for sure when we saw Aurora and Garrett out at the restaurant. His eyes were copied onto her face, his nose and cheekbones identical.

Aurora had in fact taken after her father.

The moment we found out the truth, a sinking feeling formed in my gut. Garrett had never liked our family, always coveting what he couldn't have. He was jealous our territory spanned farther than his, including a few major cities in our reach.

What worried me most was Aurora. Garrett was a bloodhound when he wanted something, and I knew Aurora wouldn't be able to handle it. She had been close to breaking down the day at the restaurant, for reasons still unknown.

The night we found her beaten replayed in my dreams, reliving the fury of finding her broken and alone. Alec had dreams of that night as well, only dare mentioning it when the two of us were alone.

Aurora had been a weakness neither of us saw coming, and yet we couldn't seem to let her go. Her secrets drove the two of us mad. When she moved in with Garrett, we were forced to stay away.

We hadn't a clue if Alpha Garrett was aware of our connection to Aurora, and wondered what the repercussions of that might be. It was against our law to keep mates away from each other. Garrett was bound by law to hand Aurora over to us.

Alpha Garretts house was completely unguarded, meant as a taunt to my brother and I. He knew he was safe in our pack, allowed to be on our territory for his daughter.

The day everything went to shit, Alec and I got a phone call from Tori.

Aurora had been in school that day, something that surprised Alec and I. She had let us touch her so willingly, giving into the mate-bond she tried

to resist. It had taken all of our collective willpower not to take Aurora in that empty classroom, completing the mating bond before she knew the truth.

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As much as we wanted that, we couldn't bring ourselves to do it. We hadn't revealed the truth to Aurora to protect her. Her fragility was obvious, and the last thing we wanted was to scare her off.

Tori had called us Saturday morning, frustration lacing her tone the moment I picked up. Alec and I weren't close with Tori and had our own friend group we stuck with, but Tori was Aurora's friend which made her important. Tori would tell us of her conversations with Aurora, and how she was doing that day. Aurora didn't confide much in Tori, a fact that pissed her off to no end.

"Aurora told me what happened to her face." Tori scoffed, her tone abrupt and angry.

Without taking a breath, Tori continued her train of thought.

"Grace saw her hanging around you two and tried to scare her off. She wouldn't give me much detail but she seemed shaken up. Apparently, Grace threatened to hurt me if she told anyone. The human girl Autumn was in on it too, they set Aurora up."

Tori's word vomit took a moment to sink in. Alec had long ago paused his video game, his dark eyes locked on my own. A ripple passed between the two of us, our facial expressions mirrored as murderous rage flowed through our body.

Grace had never been more than a toy to me, one who had long pressed her boundaries. Regardless of the countless times I had told her the truth, Grace refused to accept it.

“We’ll deal with Grace. Did she plan to do anything about this? Or was she content remaining afraid and quiet?” I murmured, fighting to keep my voice even as my eyes remained on my brother. My anger shined through in my words, and I wondered why Aurora wouldn’t tell the two of us. Regardless of her thoughts towards us, she knew she could trust Alec and I, the mate-bond told her that much.

“You know how she is.” Tori grumbled irritably, “Always trying to deal with things herself. It was hard enough getting her to admit what happened, and even then, I didn’t get many details.”

Alec was dressed and ready to leave before I hung up the phone. His dark eyes held the same murderous tint as my own. Within five minutes we were leaving the house, the plans we had for today pushed back.

Alec and I were supposed to be meeting Alpha Julian, a man who had earned his title purely by coincidence. Julian was the leader of a group of rogues, quickly growing in size throughout the years. Alpha Julian had earned his title a month ago, and made good use of his time.

His claimed territory overlapped with our own. His meeting was to discuss a potential treaty, and a possible reshaping of our own land.

Alec’s the nicer twin between us two, quick to come to an understanding. I tend to be rash, living in the moment with little care for consequence. The only thing similar about the two of us are our looks and outrageous temper.

While our parents stepped back and let us take the reins, they monitored every decision we made closely. Alec and I had never let them stop us; we had willingly stepped up to take the role. While they advised our decisions, they stepped back and let us take control. It had been hard for Dad at first, but he had never been one to enjoy relinquishing control.

We had yet to tell them about finding our mate. Neither of us looked forward to the conversation, unsure of the outcome. Twin's sharing the same mate had never happened before, then again there have never been twin Alpha's before either. Aurora belonged to Alec as much as she belonged to me. Neither of us worried what others would think, as we wouldn't change a thing about meeting Aurora.

They were both in the kitchen, laughing as my Dad made breakfast. Dad was cruel at times during his reign as Alpha, but always had a soft spot for Mom. They were the picture-perfect image of what mates should be.

"About time you two woke up." Our Mom chuckled; her eyes bright as she looked at our Dad.

Alec and I looked identical to our Dad. The three of us had the same dark chestnut hair, deep brown eyes and nearly the same facial features. Our Mom stood out next to the three of us. Light blonde hair fanned her slim face, the barest trace of lines around her eyes and mouth. Bright eyes the color of seafoam, nothing like the dark eyes that belonged to her husband and sons.

"Were pushing back the meet time with Alpha Julian." I got straight to the point, wanting to waste as little time as possible.

"Anything you guys need to talk about?" Mom looked between the two of us, her seafoam eyes scanning the angry features of our face.

“No.” Alec shook his head, his eyes hardening.

“Do what you think is right.” Dad could see the anger in our eyes, as well as our impatience.

Alec and I left the house, peeling down the road towards Grace’s house.

When we had first took the position of Alpha, we decided to choose two Beta’s. Having been raised by their side, we chose our two best friends. Jason and Zane are two of the best warriors in the pack, and both took the position as Beta’s. The downside of that decision was the constant barrage of voices in our head. There was rarely a moment of silence with Jason and Zane around.

‘Push back the meeting with Alpha Julian.’ Alec was first to speak through the mind-link, directing his words to Jason and Zane.

‘How far back?’ Zane’s voice overlapped Jason’s in the mind-link.

“Three hours?” Alec turned and asked me, his eyes hard as we sped down the road.

“We can get information from her in two.” I turned my eyes from the road, a grim smirk on my lips.

‘Push it back two hours.’ Alec responded, cutting the mind-link short before they said anything further.

The two of us were silent as we pulled into Grace’s driveway. Her parents had been killed when she was young, hardly old enough to remember them. Her Aunt had raised her, but from a distance. Money whenever she needed it, maids to cater to her needs, but her Aunt never

provided affection or restrictions. Grace had let her life turn her bitter, intent on ruining anything good.

I knocked on her front door, my sight turning a sickly shade of red. My wolf clawed at the edges of my mind, telling me to break down the damn door.

Grace had failed miserably to hide the flash of fear in her eyes as she opened the door. A coy smile played on her lips as she glanced between the two of us, but I could still see that tiny trace of fear lingering in her eyes. She had asked countless times if Alec and I would share her. My patience ran thin as I continued to refuse her suggestion.

“Kade—” My name left Grace’s lips, my self-control wavering as I shoved her inside the house. I stopped as her back slammed into the wall. Fear bled into her eyes as she realized that we knew.

“It doesn’t matter. You won’t see her again.” Grace chuckled; her face flushed from my grip on her throat.

Mated to the Alpha twins novel by Jane Doe chapter 40

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Mated to the Alpha twins novel by Jane Doe Chapter 40

Alec’s P.o.v

‘It doesn’t matter. You won’t see her again.’

Grace’s reptilian voice echoed throughout my head, sending waves of pain running down my chest. From the look on Kade’s face, he felt the same.

Grace might've been cruel and slightly insane, but she wouldn't lie. She was smart enough to tell the truth.

I could see Kade's self-control slipping, his eyes darkening murderously. Kade had always struggled with self-control, rarely thinking things through. I liked to believe that was why we worked together so well. Kade was brutal and animalistic, while I was cunning and calculated. Two sides of the same coin, the same person split into two.

Before Grace could open her mouth and speak any further, a deafening crack sounded in the house. Grace slumped to the floor, her head bouncing against the hardwood.

For a second, I had thought Kade killed her. Her eyes rolled in the back of her head, her eyelids fluttering shut. The side of her face was red, already beginning to swell. Kade had knocked her out without little thought.

Hitting women never sat right with the two of us, but this was different. Grace had hurt Aurora, had scared her into silence. As far as I was concerned, Grace was a traitor.

I watched as Kade's form shook with fury, his fists clenched into tight knots at his side. His control was slipping, and I knew if I didn't intervene, he would surely kill Grace.

"Not yet." I told my brother, my hand firm on his shoulder. "She still has useful information."

"Are you trying to save her life?" Kade snarled, his back facing me.

I knew Kade was speaking thoughtlessly. He knew I had no qualms with killing Grace, but time and place were crucial.

“Grace deserves to feel everything we put her through, don’t you think brother?” I murmured, my eyes flickering down to Grace’s unconscious form. “She still has information about Aurora.”

“Then what do you suggest?” Kade’s voice was a rough growl. He was slipping, but managed to hold on tight enough to hear my words.

“Let’s drop her off at Jason’s. Him and Zane can leave her in the dungeons. We need to talk with Garrett, see if Aurora really left.” I told him, silently thanking the heavens when his form stopped shaking. Once Kade fully lost control, nothing would stop him. That was what made him so useful in battle. His rage and brutality overwhelmed him, pushing his humanity to the side in order to kill.

“Let’s talk to her Mom first.” Kade grunted, “If she left, she might’ve stopped there first.”

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“I’m not sure she would.” I frowned, remembering her strange aversion to her Mom and Step-dad. “But we can still go there first.”

Kade grunted in approval, then turned to leave the house. I scooped Grace up like a sack of flour, cringing at the overwhelming scent of her perfume. I tossed Grace in the trunk, slamming it shut without looking back.

‘Are you with Zane?’ I asked, forming a mind-link between the four of us.

‘Sure am.’ Justin called out, the sound of video games in the background.

‘Hanging out at my place. You two coming over?’

‘We’re bringing a prisoner. We’re going to need you to put her in the dungeons until we come back.’ Kade growled, gaining some control over his voice.

Justin and Zane went silent for a moment, undoubtedly picking up on Kade’s anger. Justin and Zane were the only two who knew about Aurora. They had seen her a couple times in school, but always maintained a distance.

‘Come outside.’ I called through the mind-link, severing it once I finished.

Justin and Zane were outside in under a minute, both their faces stern. Kade remained in the car, fighting with what little self-control he had left.

I opened the trunk and watched as surprise crossed Justin and Zane’s face. It was no secret Kade and Grace had screwed around a lot, as Kade was never one for secrets. He had always made it abundantly clear that there were no strings attached, it was Grace who refused to listen.

“Woah, what happened?” Justin gaped, his blue eyes wide with surprise.

“She piss Kade off or somethin’?” Zane chuckled lightly, his smile fading as he noticed the expression on my face.

“This has somethin’ to do with Aurora, doesn’t it?” Justin frowned, always quick to catch on.

“Yes.” I nodded, anger flashing in my eyes as I looked down at Grace’s form. “Put her in her own cell. Keep her weak, but alive. I mean it, don’t let her die.”

Zane visibly gulped, looking down at Grace with a mix of anger and pity. They knew we would not show her mercy, that Kade was slowly losing his grip. Another perk of being friends with Justin and Zane were their loyalty. They already held respect for Aurora, knowing she would be their future Luna.

Kade and I headed to Aurora's house, the one she had lived in before Garrett came along. It was hard to imagine anyone living here, with the cracked and withered boards, and peeling paint. The house looked near abandoned, yet Aurora had lived here for weeks.

Keeping in front of Kade, I knocked on the front door. With each passing minute Kade's patience waned. Stepping in front of me, he threw his fist forward. The crappy wooden door splintered and snapped from the hinges. Neither Kade nor I blinked as the door clattered to the floor.

"What the fuck!" A gruff man slurred from the recliner in the living room. "Get the fuck outta my house!"

"Kade, don't." I shook my head, hand tight on his trembling shoulder. I turned my attention to Aurora's Step-Dad, noting the scent of stale beer and liquor thundering around the house. "Have you seen or heard from Aurora?"

"Why the fuck would I hear from that bitch?" Her Step-Dad half snarled half slurred. He stood from the recliner and stumbled towards us.

A defeated sigh left my lips as her step-dad edged closer to Kade. From Kade's shaking hands, I knew it was no use.

Before her step-dad could take another step, Kade had lurched forward. Her step-dad was on the floor in under three seconds, his thick neck

under Kade's hand. His claws were lengthening, pressing into the drunk man's flesh.

"He's useless." I scoffed, watching as Aurora's step-dad's face turned red. "Too drunk to know anything."

"Then it will not matter if he dies." Kade snarled, his eyes locked on Aurora's step-dad. His grip tightened around his neck, thick beads of blood sprouting from where Kade's claws pressed into his neck.

"I think we should let Aurora decide what to do with him." I mused, wondering what our kind-hearted mate might do.

After all but prying Kade's hands away from the man's neck, we left his house. Her Mom had not been there, presumably at work.

We pulled into Garrett's driveway, Kade jumped from the car before I could put it in park. My heart thundered in my chest, a feeling I wasn't familiar with.

She's here, she hasn't left. She's here, she hasn't left.

I swore Kade's frantic thoughts matched my own. Duty and respect had left long ago, leaving the frantic need to find Aurora.

If we were to do this by the book, showing up at another Alpha's house without notice is disrespectful, regardless of whose territory they are on.

We had not called Garrett ahead of time, nor did we knock on his front door.

A plump blonde woman came out of the kitchen, her eyes wide as she noticed Kade and I standing in the foyer.

“Where is Alpha Garrett?” I asked, ignoring Kade as he strolled into the house. Kade didn’t wait for her answer, but headed to the stairs.

“His office—second floor, third door on the right.” The woman stammered, clearly startled by our abrupt behavior.

Kade was up the stairs before the woman uttered her last word. The door to Garrett’s office was open by the time I ran up the stairs and down the hall. Kade stood in the open doorway, his hands balled into tight fists.

“Where is Aurora?” Kade growled lowly, still trying to keep some semblance of control over himself.

“She’s here, clearly.” Alpha Garrett scoffed, standing to adjust the crisp suit he wore.

“We were told otherwise.” I added in, my face hardening as I noticed the similarities between Alpha Garrett and his daughter. No matter how similar they looked, Aurora was nothing like Alpha Garrett.

“And who gave you that information?” Alpha Garrett scoffed, shaking his head as though he were talking to two delusional children.

The look on his face tested my own patience, anger flashing through my eyes as I looked at the man. Kade and I had stepped up into the position of Alpha as soon as we were able. We trained and studied for countless years. We were not children, nor would we be treated like one.

“Show us to her room or you can get the fuck off our territory.” Kade snapped, visibly shaking as he stared down Alpha Garrett.

“If you force me to leave, I will take her with me.” Alpha Garrett’s tone was quiet, calm. I wanted to laugh, to chuckle right in his face. If only he knew, he had no claim on Aurora, not while we were her mates.

I knew what my brother was going to say before he opened his mouth. Alpha Garrett clearly had an inflated sense of self-importance, and it was past time to knock him down a notch.

“You will take our mate nowhere.” Kade snapped, savoring the surprised look on Alpha Garrett’s face. “You have no claim on her, and now you never will.”

“Mates?” Alpha Garrett scoffed; his eyes wide as he looked between the two of us. “Both of you?”

“Both of us.” I nodded grimly, impaling him with my eyes.

Alpha Garrett reluctantly complied, taking us down the hall to where Aurora’s room sat. I could practically hear the gears turning in his head, could see him scrambling to come up with some kind of plan. His high and mighty position was crumbling. Whatever his plans had been were clearly failing.

“She’s right in here.” Alpha Garrett gestured to one of the many doors in the hallway. “Although, I don’t think she’s interested in company.”

“She will be once she sees us.” I snapped, eyes narrowing at Alpha Garrett.

Kade had regained enough control to knock on Aurora’s bedroom door, but that was as far as his patience stretched. As ten seconds passed, Kade gripped the doorknob and shoved. With a sickening crack, the door

swung open. Kade shot Alpha Garrett a murderous glare, daring him to speak.

I was quick to enter her bedroom, wrenching open the bathroom door to check inside. Unless she had taken up a liking for hide-and-seek, Aurora was nowhere in this room.

Her bed was still messy, as though she had just slept in it hours ago. Upon looking in her closet, most of her clothes were gone. All that was left was an old t-shirt and a used pair of shoes.

I gripped her comforter in my hand, bringing it to my nose and inhaling deeply. If she had just left, her scent on the comforter would still be strong. As I inhaled her scent on the comforter, a gut-wrenching pain ran through me. Her scent was dull, nearly gone from the fibers of the blanket. Wherever she was, she hadn't slept in her bed last night.

"She's gone." My voice was low, but came out in a snarl.

Anger flashed in my veins, but who was at fault? Heart stopping fear ran through me at the thought of Aurora on her own. She understood the ugliest parts of the world, but didn't know how to defend herself.

"I should have known." Garrett sighed, gaining the full attention of Kade and I.

"What did you do?" I spat each word as though it were a weapon able to pierce his skin.

I could now see how Kade felt when he was losing control. My skin felt uncomfortable and itchy as fur threatened to sprout. My human teeth felt disgustingly uncomfortable, my canines itching to break through my

gums. My body was like a cellphone on vibrate, shaking as I refrained from shifting.

“I showed her the truth.” Garrett spoke plainly, as if he had done nothing wrong. “She needs to know what she is, and what her future holds. I do not have the patience for coddling.”

“Coddling?” Kade scoffed, but the sound was similar to a snarl.

“You were absent from her entire life, steal her away from two people who clearly don’t want her, and then tell her she isn’t human? And you’re surprised she reacted this way?” Despite the anger that blistered through me, I wanted to laugh. Alpha Garrett had the nerve to look at us like we were children, and yet he had chased his own daughter away.

“I did what I thought was best.” Alpha Garrett snapped, his eyes hardening as he glared at my brother and I.

“We’re going to find her, Garrett.” Kade sneered his name, purposefully forgetting to use his title. “And when we do, you’ll never see her again.”

“She is my daughter and heir.” Alpha Garrett snapped, “I have a right to see her. She knows nothing of running a pack.”

So that’s why he finally came back for Aurora. I wondered if Kade had gleaned the hidden meaning to his words.

“She doesn’t need to know how to run a pack.” I lied, letting my lips turn up in a cruel sneer. “She’s our mate, which means your pack will soon be our own.”

Alpha Garrett’s face contorted in fury, and I knew I had assumed right.