

## Alpha's Rejected 22

### Chapter 22 - The Alpha's Rejected and Broken Mate

Amber POV

Well, this majorly sucked. I spent the whole night on the threadbare mattress, wondering if anyone had missed me at school. You might be wondering why the dungeon is located in our house and that's pretty easy to explain. You see, Luna Marion didn't want one in the pack house when she agreed to be Alpha John's mate, so my father, being the Beta, offered to have it in ours, for the very rare occasion that we needed to house a prisoner. Too bad the sadistic bastard was now using it to house his own daughter! I cursed the fact I didn't have a wolf, once again, certain I might have made it to the forest if I'd been able to shift into one.

I spent the majority of the day in solitude, very little light provided by the small, barred windows in the dungeon, grateful that at least there was no one watching me when I needed to use the toilet facilities. I heard the door creak open and craned my head to look, hearing soft footsteps approaching. I gasped out loud when I saw that it was Maria, holding a tray of food in her hands. She looked incredibly concerned for me.

"I'm sorry, but I couldn't locate the keys," she tells me sadly, as she begins to pass the food to my eager hands.

I shake my head. "It's for the best Maria, you can't free me, father would know it's you. Best to leave me down here, I knew what the consequences might be when I refused to marry my father's business partner. I still went ahead anyway."

She sighs heavily. "There is one other option child. I am going to make a phone call" she says mysteriously "I have heard your father say that the next man to offer for you is the one you will marry, regardless if you want to or not. But perhaps you can use this to your advantage and at least get a kind man. It's worth a shot" she says decidedly.

I'm intrigued. "Who did you have in mind?"

She shakes her head. "I cannot tell you, in case it doesn't come to fruition. But I will help you somehow child, I swear it" she vows, handing me a bottle of water, which I gulp down thirstily.

I don't dare get my hopes up. Right now, I was facing a lifetime of misery with a man I didn't love, or a lifetime behind bars. To be honest, I actually think that I would prefer the latter.

Maria begins to gather up the rubbish as I hastily scoff down the sandwiches and banana she brought me, placing them on the tray.

"I'll try and come back down with more food after dinner if you are still in here," she says a little stricken.

I see her wipe tears from her eyes.

I feel bad to see her in such a state.

"Thank you, Maria," I tell her softly "I would be lost without you" I add.

She gives me a shaky smile. "I love you child" she sniffs.

"I love you too Maria" I call out, as she bends down and grabs hold of the tray, standing upright and clutching it tightly towards her chest.

I watch dismally as she turns around and begins to make her way out of the dungeon, the door closing with an ominous creaking sound.

Time passes, the sunlight becoming more patchy and darker through the windows. I estimate it to be past dinnertime now. Somehow when the door opens again, I'm not surprised, but when I hear several footsteps, I freeze, realizing too late that it is not Maria that is approaching. It's my father, along with Alpha John and Luna Marian, who stare at me like I'm some sort of exotic animal in a cage.

"Amber is currently being punished for her conduct last night," father says to Alpha John, who gives a small nod and a snort.

"To be fair mate, your business partner is your age. I would have refused as well being in her shoes."

Luna Marian looks scandalous. "John" she scolds, still peering at me as I scowl at the lot of them from my position on the cot, "when you're lucky enough to be in a family such as this one, you do as your parents wish. Mathew went to a lot of trouble to find someone willing to have Amber, you must remember that she is an undesirable" she laughs lightly, but it's mixed with contempt.

"Don't you think she's been punished enough?" asks Alpha John "I think you should let her out. She's learned her lesson, I mean look at the poor lass."

I feel myself brightening. Alpha John has always been the kinder of the two, even if he didn't want me dating his son, he was never as vocal about it as his horrid wife was.

Father looks a tad disappointed but takes the keys out of his pockets as I stand up, fidgeting from one foot to the other. "I'll let her out but if she tries anything else, she's going back in here" he threatens.

"That's fair" answers Alpha John hastily.

I know father's only doing this because Alpha John is demanding it. Still, it's better than spending time in the dungeon and I can't wait to have a shower and be able to go back to school tomorrow. I hope Darius isn't here.

Father steps forward but Luna Marian halts him in his tracks, placing a gentle hand on his arm as he looks down at her puzzled. "Why don't both of you allow me to free her," she says quietly but firmly "I wish to have a word with darling Amber here anyway in private if you don't mind."

My father frowns and Alpha John hesitates, glancing between me and his wife, before giving a heavy sigh. Father acquiesces and hands over the keys to Luna Marian's waiting for hands and gestures for Alpha John to follow him out. I watch, feeling anxious and full of trepidation, wondering what on earth Luna Marian wants from me.

The second they are gone, the mask disappears from Luna Marian's face and it's replaced with one that's full of hatred as she glares at me with glittering eyes. "I can't tell you how happy I am that you are no longer dating my son" she begins with a low laugh, the keys still held firmly in her hand. "When I found out he had been stupid enough to get caught with Sophie, all I could think was thank god. Now he

has no choice but to let you go and marry a shifter who can actually help to protect the pack, instead of a weak, pathetic girl like yourself." Her voice is full of resentment and dripping with malice.

I flinch. "I'm not weak Luna Marian, even if I'm only human instead of a shifter like you'd prefer. If you got to know me, you would realize that" I protest.

She continues to glare at me. "I find you to be rude, brash, and extremely outspoken for a young girl from a wealthy family. I much prefer your sister who is quiet and obedient to her parents. She will make a lovely Luna when the time is right, unlike yourself. She is a beautiful and composed girl, Sophie, and she will make my son happy if he would just give her the blasted chance."

She shakes her head. "For some fool reason, he still seems to be in love with you" she spits "and god knows why. No matter what, he talks about you like you are some sort of immortal goddess and that needs to change."

I eye her askance. What exactly was she asking of me? I couldn't help how Darius felt about me, that was hardly something I could wave a magic wand at and change.

"What do you want?" I ask her bluntly.

She frowns in displeasure. "For starters, I want you to stay well away from him" she threatens. "I mean don't look at him, don't speak to him and if you pass him in school, go the other direction."

I was already doing that but I wisely held my tongue.

"You will stay away from Darius when he is visiting your sister, and trust me, he will start visiting if he knows what's good for him" his mother mutters, supposedly to herself.

"If I find out, that you try to see him, or even speak to him, I will make a phone call and I will make sure that you are forced to marry a repulsive, disgusting man from another pack who abuses you, is that understood" she demands.

My mouth feels dry. Surely she doesn't mean that? But her words ring true as does the threat beneath them. I swallow hard. My hands begin to shake. If anyone was capable of pulling off such a threat, it would be her. All she would need to do was get Alpha John to command me and I would be unable to resist, even if I wasn't a shifter, I was still a member of the pack and that's all that was needed. I begin to feel nauseous but struggle to keep the bile down, not wanting to vomit in front of the Luna.

"I understand," I say quietly, feeling defeated, my shoulders slumping. Everyone around me was either threatening me or trying to get rid of me and it was like a massive weight rested on my shoulders. A burden of sorts.

"Then you will do as I've told you," Luna Marian says with satisfaction, her lips curling back into a smile. "Leave Darius alone. You only make it harder for him to do what's right and I want the wedding to go off without a hitch" she adds coldly.

I just nod, staring down at the ground. I hear the sound of the keys tinkling in her hands and then the sound of the key going into the lock and turning, the door to the cell opening towards me.

"Right," Luna Marian says decisively "Darius is upstairs talking to your parents and Sophie. You, are going to be a very good girl and go straight to your room without so much as a glance his way."

Considering that I didn't want to see anyone right now, it hardly felt like a punishment. I quietly walk behind her, keeping my head down, my gaze fixed on my feet as I force them to take steps, leaving behind the dank and dark dungeon. My father meets us at the foot of the stairs, no sign of Darius or my sister anywhere. "Right, come with me," he says calmly and I follow, Luna Marian going in search of her husband. I distantly hear everyone talking in the living room but ignore it, my stomach churning as my father takes me straight to my bedroom.

I gasp. The windows to my room have been replaced with bars, hard thick ones, preventing me from being able to leave. There is a slit in the door for some unfathomable reason and I can't work out what it's for.

"You are not going back to school," father tells me evenly "instead I will get a tutor for you. You will not leave this room. You will not go to work. You will not speak to anyone besides myself and your mother, or Maria. Your food will be brought to you and put through the slit in your door."

My mouth is dry still. "Why are you doing this?" I ask thickly, my voice slightly hoarse.

He laughs. "Until you agree to marry the next man who offers for your hand, you will stay in here. Is that understood? If this is the only way for you to agree, then so be it. You will be confined until you agree, no ifs, no buts" he exhales.

I feel hurt and annoyed. Part of me considers running for it, but Luna Marian and Alpha John are downstairs and would no doubt capture me before I made it to the front door. I open the door to the bathroom while my father watches and discover that he's placed bars in the window there as well. I turn around and see he's smiling with satisfaction at the look of horror on my face.

"Why are you doing this?" I ask him "don't you care about me at all?"

"Your mother is the soft-hearted one" he spits out "not me. I wish we had drowned you at birth with your red hair and strange looks. If it wasn't for your mother, I would have killed you that night you didn't shift, but she intervened and the only reason you are alive today is because of her."

I'm stunned. Does my mother actually care for me in some aspect? Did she stop my father from murdering me? My god, I've always thought she hated me and now I was finding out she didn't.

Before I can say anything, my father stomps out of the room and then locks the bedroom door, a new lock I just realized, and my bedroom door is sturdily built out of heavy wood. There was no way I could break out of it. I was trapped. This time I might not be in the dungeon, I thought sadly, but it was a prison nonetheless and one where I couldn't break my way out. They were going to try and break me, to get me to agree to marry and it was only a matter of time, I knew, before I gave up and agreed to it.