CHAPTER 20: MIA

Claire raised her brows at Sebastian questioningly when he just stared at her calmly without answering her question. At a glance, it looked as if he was unaffected by her question. But his flushed ears told another story and Claire smirked, knowing he would not admit to the real reason for his visit. That he was worried for her and wanted to check on her.

Sebastian narrowed his eyes when he saw Claire smiling at him.

"What?"

"You came here to check on me, didn't you? Devin told you I was injured, and you wanted to see for yourself, right?" Claire asked, a knowing smile on her lips.

Sebastian flushed at her question, his ears turning even more red and he looked away, refusing to look at her.

"What nonsense are you spouting? Why would Devin tell me anything about you? I didn't know you were injured until I got here."

Claire's eyes followed a bead of sweat that dripped

down his nose before falling into his neck and disappearing inside his shirt. The shirt that fit his broad frame snugly, that is. Her hands itched to follow the drop's trail, but she blinked her eyes to regain her wits. 'Focus, Claire, focus!'

As Sebastian wiped the sweat from his brows, Claire smirked.

'Why are you sweating this badly, oh mighty alpha? You are such a terrible liar!'

"Oh, really?" She taunted him.

"Of course. We are just acquaintances, right? Why would I ask about you?" Sebastian asked, a challenging tone in his voice. But she could see a glimpse of hope in his eyes.

And doubt. Doubt if she could feel their bond. Otherwise, how would she know he cared for her? And why would she care if he did?

Claire sighed, the playful look vanishing from her face. She couldn't tell him she knew they were mates. Not now...

"Are we just acquaintances, Sebastian? I thought we were more than that."

Sebastian gulped, his heart skipping beats as he

stared at her crestfallen look. How will he tell her she was not just an acquaintance? That she was his world?

"Aren't we?" Sebastian asked, hoping she would say no. That she will tell she cared for him too. But Liam already marked her, and it was impossible she would care about him after that. How hopeless was this situation?

Claire shook her head and stared at Liam. 2

"We are friends, aren't we?"

Sebastian nodded, looking away from her to hide the pain in his eyes. Friend. That's all he will be to her. As long as he has a place in her life, he will be whatever she will let him be.

"We are friends," he agreed, and Claire smiled.

Sebastian was her true friend in her last life. The one who stood with her and saved her from all the traps that Liam laid for her.

"And we will always be," she said. In all our lives. Friends, soul mates.

She watched as Sebastian's face darkened, apparently taking her words the wrong way and thinking she meant they will only be friends.

"So you don't care if I am hurt?" Claire teased him, a mocking pout on her lips as she stared at him.

"I didn't say that," Sebastian defended himself, and Claire raised her brows.

"So you do?"

Sebastian looked up, and Claire's breath hitched at the raw emotions that shone out of his eyes.

"Always," Sebastian said, his voice barely above a whisper. Then his cheeks turned red, and he looked away, muttering under his breath as if scolding himself for admitting his feelings.

Suddenly, her wolf Mia stirred in her consciousness, a warm satisfied feeling rolling out of her, and Claire realised she was listening to their conversation. Ever since Claire was reborn, Mia had been silent, almost hiding inside a cocoon.

Claire knew she was shaken by the ordeal they went through, losing their baby and dying at Diana's hands. With how depressed she appeared to be, Claire had given space to her wolf until she was ready. During this time, other than the occasional odd bursts of emotions, she had shown little interest in anything. Until they met Sebastian, that is.

Her silent wolf had come out of her cocoon when she walked in the woods with Caleb at the night of the party. Mia had cherished every moment they spent together bonding with him. She hoped Mia will be fine then but after that night; she went right back to her shell, hiding away from the world.

Mia was the only one who could understand Claire's pain since she suffered the same and having her to share it will be an absolute boon. With Mia listening to their conversation, Claire decided to reach out to her, trying to see how her wolf was. She didn't want her going back to hiding again after this. She needed her wolf with her in this fight.

'Hey girl,' she greeted her tentatively.

When there was no response after a while, Claire sighed in defeat. But she could still feel Mia in her mind. Did that mean?

'Hello Claire,' Mia replied in a small voice. 'I am sorry I haven't been there for you,' she added after a pause.

'Don't be. I know it's not easy to adjust. I did because I had no choice, but I don't blame you for wanting to get yourself together after what we went through.'

Mia sighed in response, and then Claire felt her wolf's

aura get brighter as determination rose inside her.

`We will fight this together from now. We won't let them harm us again,' Mia growled out.

'We will teach them a lesson. They will pay for everything they did to us,' Claire vowed in agreement.

'And we have our mate with us,' Mia added, her voice sounding lighter.

'Yes, we do. And we got the best, didn't we?'

'That we did,' Mia said, laughter in her voice.

Claire smiled, her confidence rising. With Mia joining her, she felt invincible. Liam and Diana, just wait for us.

Claire felt something that felt like a caress in her mind, and then Mia went silent. But this time, she could still feel her wolf in the back of her mind and knew that this time Mia was there to stay.

Feeling lighter with her wolf joining her fight, she looked at Sebastian, who was looking at his hand as if it was the most fascinating thing in the world. She leaned forward, a small smile playing on her lips.

'Fine. You won't admit you came for me, but it doesn't change the fact that it's exactly what

happened.'

"As you can see, I wasn't injured that badly. It is already healing and I will be fine soon," she said and Sebastian's calm facade broke as he stared at her with a frown.

"You had just returned to your pack a few days ago, and you rushed back here because of me. If you have any urgent matters in your pack, you don't have to bother to stay here," she continued.

She had wanted to know if Sebastian cared for her like he did in her previous life. But seeing him rush to her pack, dropping everything, she felt like a brat who threw a tantrum. She shouldn't have disturbed him like that just to test him.

Sebastian narrowed his eyes at her in response to her words. He wanted to tell her he didn't want to leave when he had just arrived and seen her. He wanted to spend more time with her, even if he couldn't admit to her how much she meant to him. That she was the other half of his soul. How could he leave when he had just got a glimpse of her? But he couldn't admit his reasons to her. So he gulped and pasted an indifferent mask on his face.

"There is no urgent business in my pack that requires

me there now. My pack is in the safe hands of my beta, Sasha. She will take care of everything until I return." Sebastian said. Claire noticed how he didn't correct her again, saying he didn't come because of her. But then she straightened up, remembering his beta Sasha.

In her last life, Sasha had never been friendly to Claire. In fact, she was downright hostile to her on occasions and she always wondered what she had done to piss the woman off. But now that Claire knew Sebastian was her mate, she connected the dots. Since Sebastian already knew Claire was his mate, his beta Sasha must have known it too. So why was she hostile to her Alpha's mate? She should have respected her instead, right? Unless... unless she hated Claire was Sebastian's mate. And that could only mean one thing. That Sasha had an interest in Sebastian.

Claire hadn't thought much of it at the time, but now that she thought about it, she had always seen Sasha stare at Sebastian with adoration. Adoration that she thought was for her alpha, but now she knew it was more than that. All that longing glances Sasha threw at Sebastian when she thought no one was looking at her now made sense. Sasha wanted Sebastian for herself. When Sebastian found his mate, Sasha must have hated her. Now her dislike for Claire absolutely

made sense.

Claire remembered all the mean things Sasha had done to her in her last life and a devilish idea formed in her head. How about getting a little revenge? Oh Sasha darling, we are going to have a little fun! 2

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