CHAPTER 26: JUST A FRIEND

As he walked towards his room, Sebastian had a gentle smile on his face. He remembered the trust in Claire's eyes as she accepted his promise of always being there for her. He had meant every word of his promise, but he had expected her to take it lightly. But seeing the earnest look in her eyes, he knew she believed every word he uttered. Seeing her trusting him that much, Sebastian couldn't help but feel giddy.

As he reached his room, he paused, seeing Devin leaning against the door casually, as if waiting for him. Seeing the shit-eating grin on his face, Sebastian sighed in defeat. This was not going to be good. He just knew it. That man was up to no good if that devilish grin on his face was any indication.

"Hey bro!" Devin greeted him cheerfully and Sebastian just raised his brows, waiting for what was to come. After all these years, he had a fair idea of what his best friend was up to.

Devin grinned at him before wiggling his brows up and down.

"So... you are back, huh?" Devin asked, and Sebastian raised his brows at him.

"Obviously, since I am standing right in front of you."

"Smart ass," Devin muttered under his breath, and Sebastian rolled his eyes.

"So you just came here to confirm if I am back? Alright. I am back. See you later," Sebastian said while opening his room and stepping

inside while hoping his nosy friend will leave him alone. But Devin just followed him into the room, and Sebastian knew he had no such luck.

Devin plopped down on a chair and grinned at Sebastian. Here it comes…

"Just a few words about a certain girl's injury and you came rushing all the way back here? She is that important, huh?" He asked in a taunting tone, making Sebastian sigh. He knew it!

Sebastian looked at Devin with his signature blank mask in response.

"Claire is a dear friend, and it's natural that I would care for her. After knowing she was hurt, wasn't it normal that I would check on her? I would have done the same for you. Wouldn't you have visited me if it was me who was injured?"

Devin smirked at Sebastian.

"I don't think so, dude. If it was me who was injured, you would have told me that a minor wound like that wouldn't kill me. You would have asked me to get over it." He raised his brows, daring Sebastian to contradict him. "And no, I wouldn't have visited you if you were injured either, because if I did, it would hurt your manly pride and you would kick my ass for doing something so insulting."

Sebastian just rolled his eyes, unable to find a retort.

"Just a friend, huh?" Devin asked and Sebastian stared at him blankly, even though he knew very well what his friend was asking.

"What?"

Devin rolled his eyes, seeing Sebastian's attempt to act ignorant.

"I asked if Claire was just a friend. You threw all your pack responsibilities and rushed here for a friend?" Devin asked incredulously.

"She is just a friend," Sebastian replied firmly. Even though he wished otherwise, she saw him as just a friend and if that was what she wanted him to be, he will be the best friend that she will ever have. A flash of hurt passed through his eyes at the thought of being just a friend to his mate. But then a glimpse of her face as she stared at him with hope, trust, and affection flashed in his mind. She certainly cared about him, and seeing her smiling face was worth every pain he suffered. He would do anything to see her smile. Always.

Devin looked at Sebastian, who had a certain glow to him that had never been there before. He had a feeling that it was all because of Claire and wondered what exactly was going on between them when the girl had already chosen a mate. Did he even have a chance with Claire? He didn't want his friend to suffer from a hopeless love when he had no chance of getting the girl. He needed a girl who would love and accept him for what he was.

Then Devin sighed, remembering Sasha. She was a lovely girl who was always there for Sebastian. Many times he had seen the adoring gazes she threw at Sebastian when she thought no one was looking. The way she glowed whenever Sebastian spoke to her. He knew for certain that the girl adored Sebastian. He liked her and thought they would end up together one day. Devin had the opinion that they would make a lovely couple. But seeing the way Sebastian rushed here after hearing Claire was injured, he was no longer sure of that.

Deciding to test Sebastian's feelings for Sasha, he cleared his throat.

"Poor Sasha will be sad if she knows you are doing all this for a woman. She will be upset to know you abandoned the pack and rushed here shoving all the responsibilities to her just because you wanted to see if Claire was fine," Devin said in a singsong voice, half teasing while half probing Sebastian's feelings for Sasha.

Devin knew all about love since he himself was drowning from what he was feeling for Eunice. He could see the same glow and hope in Sebastian's eyes whenever he even mentioned Claire. He could clearly see that Claire meant very much to Sebastian and if he really liked her, Devin would respect his best friend's decision. After all, it was his life and Devin had no plans to meddle in it. If he ever made a mistake and regret it, Devin will be there to help him through it. He could only hope his friend would get all the happiness in the world because he absolutely deserved it.

Sebastian stared at Devin with a frown, his entire demeanor screaming dissatisfaction.

"Why would Sasha be upset? It's her duty to tend to the pack in my absence, and she shouldn't care what my reasons for leaving are."

"But…"

"What?"

Devin shook his head. Did he really not know Sasha's feelings for him or was he acting blind deliberately? If so, Devin would have to address it himself.

"The girl clearly likes you. Don't you know it?"

Sebastian frowned but didn't look shocked. So he knew. Of course, it would be a wonder if someone as keen as him wouldn't know such an obvious thing.

"It is just a crush. She will get over it," Sebastian said and seeing the dubious look of Devin, he continued. "I have only seen her as a friend, and it will never change. She is one of the very few people I care about in this world, but it can never be more than what we have now," Sebastian said and Devin sighed.

"She wouldn't agree with your thoughts. She believes she has a chance."

Sebastian shook his head, the frown on his face intensifying.

"I have never encouraged her nor given her reasons to like me. She will forget me when she finds her mate. Nothing would matter but him when she does."

Devin had to agree with Sebastian that when one meets their mate, they would forget everything and everyone else. He was experiencing it firsthand and could attest to it. Then he frowned. But how would Sebastian know that when he had never found his mate?

Oh well, he must have just heard it from people with mates.

Seeing Devin pondering his words, Sebastian sighed. He didn't want to be interrogated any further and decided to change the topic. And he knew exactly what to say to get Devin's attention.

"So, how are things between Eunice and you going?"

Hearing the magic word aka Eunice's name, Devin straightened up,

the thoughtful look on his face replaced by a melancholic look.

"I liked her from the moment I met her. I thought my feelings for her were intense then, but it only got deeper after hanging out with her for days. Now I can't spend a moment without thinking about her and I am not telling that in a bad way," Devin said with a smile. "Even if I am frustrated at something, just a smile from her and everything seems alright. A word from her and I am ready to drop everything and rush to her. I feel as if my life has got a meaning after meeting her."

Sebastian smiled at Devin, knowing exactly what he meant. He felt the same with Claire. Each day he wakes up and the first thought on his mind will be that of her. Seeing her smile at something he did made him feel as if he had won the very world. Just her presence was enough to make him forget every frustration he felt. Being in love surely was magical.

Then he frowned, seeing Devin sighing.

"What? You said you liked her. So, what's the issue?"

"I said I like her. I really do. But I am not sure what she feels for me. She doesn't feel our mate bond like I do, and I don't know if she sees me as just a friend or if she wants more with me. Not knowing how she feels about me is killing me, man."

Devin frowned while running his hands through his hair in frustration, and Sebastian sighed next to him. Not knowing what one's mate felt for you indeed kills a man. Wouldn't he know?