

Chapter 15

Iris and Daniel

Mayra

I wake up with a start and immediately survey the room. I breathe a sigh of relief when I realize that I am in my room.

'It must have been a terrible nightmare'. I think to myself as the memories of what happened earlier flood in.

“Mayra?” His voice makes me snap my head in his direction so fast it causes me to be dizzy.

Looking at him. Still dressed in a suit brings about dread in me. The fact that he is here means that everything that happened did happen. That none of it was just a bad dream.

I begin shaking. My heart beating wildly. I wanted to escape. I wanted to leave. To be far away from this place and from the woman and girl who were probably downstairs.

“Calm down, love, you’re safe...everything is going to be okay.”
Darren’s voice sounds soothing but it does nothing to calm the storm that was raging inside me.

He stands up and comes to me. Then he hugs me close. I take in his scent. It calms me but not that much.

“Come...they’re waiting for us downstairs,” he lets go of me and gives me his hand but I refuse to take it.

I shake my head. I didn’t want to go downstairs. Didn’t want to see the little girl. It might sound heartless but I just couldn’t face her. Because she represented something I’d rather forget.

“Grace, the woman you met said she won’t leave until she speaks to you,” he informs me softly.

“I don’t want to talk to her. I can’t talk to her.”

“You’ll have to honey,”

Hooking his hands under my arms, he lifts me off the bed and places me on my feet.

Cupping my cheeks, he kisses me before letting me go. “I’ll be with you, you don’t have to be afraid of anything.”

For the first time since our relationship started, his kiss doesn’t take my breath away. Mainly because I was panicking and breaking on the inside.

After nodding my head, he takes my hand firmly in his and leads me out of the door and down the stairs.

The moment we get to the living room and I see them, I begin trembling. My heart begins racing again and the need to turn around and flee consumes me.

Darren must have sensed this because his hold tightens, thus preventing me from making my escape.

He leads me to the seat opposite Grace and the girl. Ren and Bash are present but Micah is nowhere to be seen.

I sit down and immediately my foot starts tapping the floor. Darren places his hand on my knee and the anxious behavior stops.

I face them. Grace is smiling at me kindly but I have no energy or will to return her smile. The girl on the other hand has a cookie in her hand, probably given to her by Ren. She's staring at the floor. I can't tell whether it's because she's shy or like me, she's scared.

"Hi Mayra, it's good to officially meet you," Grace says, making me pull my eyes from the girl.

I don't reply. What's there to say anyway? From where I'm standing, I'm not pleased to meet her. She seems like a sweet lady but I hate what her being here represents.

“Now that Mayra is here, could you please tell us why you’re here?” Darren asks, his deep and strong voice cutting through the tense atmosphere.

Grace smiles. “Definitely. I didn’t want to speak without her here because this is a sensitive topic. I work with the government and I’m the social worker in charge of Iris’ case.”

I take a sharp intake of air at her name. Hearing her name makes all these so much real.

“What does her case have to do with Mayra?” Ren asks, a bit puzzled.

I knew what she was going to say next. I knew the revelation that she was about to make. I involuntarily close my eyes in an effort to ward off the truth.

Fuck! Why now? As if I didn’t already have enough to deal with.

“Because she’s Iris’s mother.” Grace says softly.

The gasp of surprise is from Ren. The sharp intake of air is from Sebastian. The only indication that Darren heard what Grace said is the fact that he stills besides me.

I let out the air I was holding and open my eyes. They immediately move to Iris. We had the same blonde hair but everything else was her despicable father’s. Including her green eyes which were now staring at me. Studying me much in the same manner her father used to do.

I shiver at the uncanny similarity and pull my eyes from hers. I instead focus on the three people who have come to mean a lot to me. Their faces display varying shades of shock.

I wonder what they're thinking. Do they think I'm a terrible person? A terrible mother? That I had a daughter but I never even told them or even acknowledged that I had a child. Were they judging me right now?

I look at Darren. His opinion is the only one that matters to me. His face is closed off so I can't tell what he's thinking and that increases my worry.

"Where has she been all this time?" Sebastian interrupts our thoughts.

"She was living with her nanny. A two-hour drive away from here. Nancy, her nanny, died a few months ago. That's how she ended up with us." Grace answers.

"What happened to the dad?" Darren enquires.

I knew what happened but I didn't chime in.

"According to the cook in the estate where she was living, her dad's name is Daniel. He didn't have much to say except that the estate has been in their family for years and that he has worked there since Daniel was a teenager. According to him, Daniel came home with a newborn baby five years ago and said she was his daughter. He then left her in the care of Nancy and traveled for work though he did visit her when he had the chance. About five months later though, he stopped coming home

and no one has seen or heard from him since then.” Grace says before continuing.

“They tried looking for him but they never found him even after filling a missing person’s report. The pay continued coming in so he stayed and Nancy continued raising Iris. That is until she died from a stroke. We managed to obtain her birth certificate...Mayra was listed as her mother. There wasn’t a last name, that’s why it took us so long to find you.” the last part is said while looking at me.

No one says anything. We all just stare at Grace.

I knew there was no way they would ever find the Monster. He’s been gone for a very long time. There won’t be any evidence that he was killed.

Grace looks at her watch and stands up. “I’ll have to leave but I’ll come back with some paperwork in the course of the week, meanwhile Iris will be staying here with you. There’s no need for her to go back to the orphanage since we’ve found you.”

I open my mouth about to argue. I wanted to yell that she couldn’t stay here. That she had to take Iris with her but Ren cuts me off.

“Of course. She’s family so she’ll be staying with us from now on,” she smiles sweetly.

I send a scathing look in her direction but she ignores me.

“Good, then have a good night, I’ll see myself out,” she turns and leaves. Seconds later we hear the front door opening and closing.

Sebastian leans back in his seat. He isn’t bothered. After all, every pack member knows how to behave when a human is in the vicinity and he must have given them a heads up.

I look at Iris again. She looks so small and fragile and a part of me wants to go to her but I can’t. She is my daughter. My flesh and blood, but she’s also a product of rape and I’m not sure I could ever look past that glaring detail.

“You have a lot of explaining to do.” Ren growls at me, scaring Iris in the process.

My only response is to sigh in defeat.