

Chapter 16

"Anne, you must have said the word naked a hundred times by now," I say.

"Now, you're exaggerating," she tells me.

"Okay. Maybe not hundred times but at least ten times you have mentioned the word naked. Why do you think that being naked will make Alarick accept me?"

"You are his mate. When he'll see you naked, his inner wolf may come out and he might accept you." I roll my eyes as he hearing Anne's ridiculous theory "No, I'm serious!" She says convincingly. "Why don't you try my method? It might work!"

"I'm not going to be naked in front of Alarick," I say with determination.

"But—"

"No buts," I conclude and exit my room to escape from Anne but she follows behind me.

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It is night and I'm sitting at the doorsteps of the pack house watching the stars twinkle in the night sky because I'm not feeling sleepy. After his argument with Mr. West in morning, Alarick had stormed out of the pack house and had gone somewhere. And he hasn't returned yet. I'm not worried about him getting attacked. No one in their right minds would think to attack one of the strongest Alphas in the world. So, I'm not worried about Alarick being in danger. I am just angry with him for disrespecting his father by storming out of the pack house. He takes his father for granted. When Alarick will return, I'm going to give him a piece of my mind. He needs to learn to respect his father. He is the Alpha but that doesn't mean that he has the freedom to disrespect his father. He needs to truly learn how an Alpha behaves. These are the matters concerning Alarick. Now, let's come to his sister.

Throughout the day, Anne had been pestering me to be naked in front of Alarick. She kept requesting, she kept begging but I didn't listen to her. At the end of the day, she was really sad because I didn't give in to her wishes. I tried explaining to her that being naked in front of Alarick won't make him accept me but she wasn't ready to listen. A familiar scent breaks my train of thoughts. When I look ahead of me, I see Alarick coming my way. When he reaches me, he asks,

"What are you doing here?"

"Waiting for you to grace me with your presence," I say sarcastically. He rolls his eyes. I stand up. "Where were you?" I ask him.

"I don't need to answer you," he says with hatred. Before he can walk past me, I block his way.

"You need to answer me. I am your mate," I say slowly so that my words may enter his head and he may find it easy to understand.

"Says who?"

"Alarick, I don't know why you are denying me and I don't even care," I start to say. "But don't disrespect your father because of me."

"Now you will tell me what to do?" He asks, becoming furious.

"I can't even dare to tell you what to do because you happen to be one of the strongest Alphas in the world and I just happen to be a mere Beta," I speak, using the right words to bring down his anger. I don't want to argue with him because I know it will be useless. And I'm definitely not in the mood to argue with him in the middle of the night. I continue, "I am just requesting you to not disrespect your father. He doesn't deserve to be treated like the way you're treating him. He doesn't deserve to be taken for granted. Respect his opinions. It's not necessary for you to agree with him but don't be disrespectful towards him. Don't you realize that he gets hurt whenever you are rude to him, argue with him or disrespect him?" I don't wait for him to speak. "You should consider yourself lucky that your father is alive! If my father was alive then I wouldn't even think of disrespecting him." My voice cracks at the end of my speech at the mention of my father. I quickly turn around so that Alarick doesn't see the tear escaping from my eye. I quickly wipe that tear away.

"There's dinner kept for you in the refrigerator," I inform him, my voice shaking a little. I further add, "This time, I didn't help Anne." I add the last part so that Alarick doesn't go to bed hungry thinking that I've helped Anne to prepare the food. I straightaway go to my room and lie on the bed, burying my face in the pillow. I'm trying so hard to not cry. I really miss my Dad. I remember his every laugh and his every smile. And it pains me to know that his laughter won't echo in my ears anymore. I'm feeling sorry for my little sister because she shared very few moments with Dad. How I wish that he would be alive to see Christina speak her first word, to watch her first step, to see her walking for the first time!

My heart aches even more to know that my father isn't alive, that he is dead and he won't ever come back. My heart aches knowing that I won't be able to run to him and tell him all my problems in the hope of getting my problems solved. He wasn't just my parent. He was my guardian angel. He was my problem-solver. He was my laughter medicine. He was much more than a father. And the thought of never seeing him again makes me cry. Within minutes, my cries turn louder. I try to calm myself but the tears don't stop.

Suddenly, I find myself in someone's arms. My head is on his chest while his hands run on my back in a soothing manner trying to calm me. I instantly stop crying when that person's scent hits my nostrils. I am left confused when I inhale his scent. My mind must be playing tricks on me. That must be it. Otherwise why would someone who hates me come to my room to comfort me?

I pull away from the embrace to know who exactly is comforting me and I'm shocked to find out that the person who was comforting me earlier is none other than Alarick! I blink my eyes in an attempt to vanish him into thin air but he isn't going anywhere. He continues to stare at me. It's unbelievable that I was in his arms a few seconds back. His mere presence in my room is unbelievable!

I see his hand reaching for my cheeks and he gently wipes my tears with his thumb. I never thought that the one who makes me cry is also capable of wiping away my tears. "Are you okay?" He asks softly. I am so dumbstruck as he hearing his caring words that I just nod as an answer. I don't think that words would come out of my lips as he seeing this side of him. "Let's lie down," he whispers. We both lie down on my bed facing each other. He wraps his arm around my waist and brings me closer to him. I am surprised by this gesture. It's hard to believe that the one who has a problem with me being in the same room as him is now lying beside me. But I'm not complaining. I like him being near me.

This is what I wanted when I first came here to live with the Dawnfall Depths Pack, to be in Alarick's arms and feel at peace. I rest my head on his chest, closing my eyes as I enjoy listening to his heartbeat. His heartbeat is now my favorite lullaby and so I find myself surrendering to sleep.

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I slowly open my eyes with a smile on my face as I remember what happened last night. I still remember Alarick lying beside me on the bed. But I'm disappointed when I don't find him by my side. Where is he?

Bright sunlight coming from the window tells me that I've slept late. I get up from the bed and exit my room in search of Alarick. I check his bedroom and study but he's not there.

"Who are you looking for?"

I jump and turn around to find Anne standing in a distance. Where did she come from?!

"Alarick," I reply. "Where is he?"

"It's eleven o'clock. He has gone to the training ground to warm up," she answers. Oh. How could I forget that today is training practice? She comes near me and smells me. "You smell like Alarick."

"That's because I slept with him," I answer.

"Oh!" She exclaims and wiggles her eyebrows. The way she's looking at me tells me that she's thinking something perverted.

"Anne, I literally slept with him on the same bed. We didn't do anything that you have in mind," I tell her.

She's disappointed but then she cheers up. "It's a progress that you both shared the same bed last night."

"Yeah, it is," I say. "I'm going to shower. I have to get ready for the training practice," I inform her. She nods and I return back to my room to have a quick shower. After getting dressed, I head to the living room where I find Charles and Daniel already dressed up, watching television.

"Good morning," Charles says when he senses my presence.

"Good morning," I greet him as I sit beside Anne.

"I saw Alarick exiting your room early in the morning," he says teasingly. "What's going on?"

"Honestly, I don't know," I answer. Last night, seeing Alarick's side that I didn't know existed was very new to me. His sudden change in behavior confused me a lot. It made me think that what made him enter my room last night. Is it because he heard my cries? I don't know. But it felt good knowing that he was the one to comfort me.

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The training practice went well. Alarick didn't pass any rude comments on me. When Daniel and I were fighting, he silently watched us for a few seconds. His gaze on me really made me nervous and self-conscious about myself.

Thank God, we're back to the pack house. The training left me exhausted. I straightaway go to my room. This time, I don't forget to close my bedroom door before going to shower. I don't want a repeat of what happened yesterday. After having a relaxing shower, with a towel wrapped around my body, I emerge from the bathroom. I go to get my backpack but I'm shocked when I don't find it near the bed. I search the whole room but still I don't find it. I try to recall where I kept my bag before going to shower. And then, it suddenly clicks!

I haven't misplaced my bag. It has been stolen! And I know who has stolen my backpack.

"Anne!" I shout at the top of my lungs. She wanted me to get naked in front of Alarick. I refused. And now, my bag is missing. It's her doing! I didn't know that she would go to the extent of stealing my bag just to get me naked! After I had shouted her name, I had expected her to come running to my room but she didn't. I know she's hiding from me. I'm going to find her and scold her.

I go towards the bedroom door, open it slightly and peek outside. There's no one in sight. I quietly step out of my room, clutching my towel to myself as if my life depended on it. I can't even imagine if the towel falls accidentally and someone sees me naked! That would be really embarrassing! I swear I'm not going to leave Anne for putting me in this awkward situation.

Using my enhanced hearing, I try to hear for any sound in the pack house but the only sound reaching to my ears is the the heartbeat of just one person. Who could that person be? And where have others gone?

I head to Roaming's room in the hope of borrowing her clothes since I can't be Roaming's room in the pack house in just a towel. When I reach her room and turn the knob, I find it locked. I know Anne has locked her room on purpose so that I can't get clothes to wear. But I'll show her that I can even survive without borrowing her clothes. I will borrow Charles's clothes instead. I go to his room. Just before my hand reaches for knob of the door, I debate with myself. Will it be a good idea to wear Charles' clothes? Will Alarick be jealous if he sees me in his Beta's clothes? Well, I prefer Alarick seeing me in his Beta's clothes rather than seeing me wrapped in a towel.

I turn the knob and find it locked too. "This can't happen!" I say while violently turning the door knob in frustration. Anne had it all planned out! She must've told Charles to lock his room so that I couldn't take his clothes to wear.

"What are you doing?" I leave the door knob when I hear that voice. I slowly turn towards the source of that voice and find Alarick standing in front of his room. How the hell did I forget that his room happens to be just beside Charles' room?

So, here it is! I'm standing partially naked in front of Alarick, just like Anne wanted. I'm not going to leave her.