

Chapter 22

I walk towards his desk and place my hands on it. Looking in his cold blue eyes, I say, "I know my presence annoys the hell out of you. So, I'm ready to return to my pack right now if you truthfully tell me the reason why you're denying me." For a few minutes, he continues to look at me while I patiently wait for his answer.

He opens his mouth and speaks, "Chriselda, I already told you the reason why I'm denying you. Don't you remember what I said to you when you first came here to know why I didn't acknowledge you as my mate?"

I perfectly remember his words but still I say, "No. Would you help me to refresh my memory?" By the look on his face, I can tell that he knows that I'm doing this on purpose.

He exhales deeply, probably because he's tired by my behavior. "Chriselda, I'm going to tell you the same thing that I told you that day. The reason why I'm denying you is because I don't want a mate. Why are you finding these simple words hard to process in your head?" He remarks.

"Alarick," I say, "Thank you for helping me to process the fact that you don't want a mate. Now, I want to know why you don't want a mate."

He stands up, puts his hands on the desk and leans in so that our faces are inches apart now. "Asking me why I don't want a mate is like asking me why I don't smile. I don't smile because I just don't smile! Simple. I don't want a mate because I just don't want a mate!" His voice becomes suddenly loud at the end which makes me flinch.

"You know," I start to say, "There's always a reason behind everything."

He is quick to reply, "Not this time." I look at him for a few seconds, trying to catch any movements on his face which would indicate that he's lying. When I find no such movements, I turn around and head towards the door. Just as I'm about to open the door, I hear Alarick say, "I hope you're going to your room to pack your things."

"Yes, you are right," I reply without facing him. I can feel tears brimming my eyes. My eyesight is blurring. If I turn around now then I'm going to cry and I don't want to cry in front of my so-called mate who is so eager to see me returning to my pack.

"Chriselda, I'm so glad that we had this conversation. And I truly regret of not having this conversation earlier. If we would've had this conversation a few days back then you would've returned to your pack early."

"I know," I whisper. I'm finding it so hard to speak. I'm afraid that if I speak then my voice will come out shaky and I don't want that to happen.

"It was nice meeting you," he says.

A shaky laugh escapes my mouth. I can't help but shake my head at his words. "I know how nice you felt by meeting me," I remark.

"Goodbye, Chriselda. I hope we never meet again," he concludes.

I nod as I say, "I hope the same." I open the door and slam it hard behind me. I find Charles and Daniel standing. By their faces I can tell that they heard everything.

Charles quickly comes to me and asks, "You weren't serious, right? You're not leaving now, are you?"

"Charles, what difference does it make, leaving now or two days later?" I ask.

He puts his hands on my shoulders and says, "Alarick will be miserable without you."

I can't help but laugh. "Yeah, right," I say. "I should go to my room now to pack my things."

"I'm going to call Mr. West," he announces and heads towards the front door. He thinks that Alarick's father would be able to stop me from leaving since he was the one to bring me here.

"Charles, don't," I request him. My words halt him in his tracks. "If Mr. West comes here then he will convince me to stay here longer and I don't want that. I want to return to my pack. My pack needs me."

"Okay," he says after a long pause. "I won't stop you from leaving. But you should inform Mr. West that you're leaving since he was the one to bring you here."

"If Mr. West comes to know that I'm leaving early then he will be disappointed and I don't want to see him like that," I say.

"He will be more disappointed if he comes to know that you returned to your pack without informing him," he reasons with me.

"Charles, I won't be able to face him. I just want to return to my pack."

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After making sure that all of my things are packed, I pick up my backpack, hang it over my shoulder and exit my room. When I reach the living room, I say to Charles and Daniel, "Bye, guys."

"I hope you'll remain in touch with us," says Daniel.

"I don't think it will be a good idea. I want to forget about Alarick and remaining in touch with you guys will always make me remember that I have a mate who doesn't want me," I say. They both remain silent for a while. "It's time for me to go." I break the silence.

"I'll accompany you to your pack," Charles offers. Before I can open my mouth to refuse, he says, "This may be the last time we see each other so accompanying you to your pack is the least I can do."

"Okay," I say, finally agreeing to him. After bidding farewell to Daniel, Charles and I leave the pack house and head towards my pack. On our way, we remain silent. When we cross the boundary and walk further into my pack's forest, I see Joshua talking to his "followers." One of his followers nudges him to turn around. When he turns around, he is surprised to see me. He walks towards me and says, "I thought you were going to return after a week but you returned soon. Did the Dawnfall Depths kick you out of their pack?"

Charles takes a threatening step towards him. Before Charles can do something drastic, I gently push him back with my hand. I turn to Joshua and say, "I wish I could tell you that Dawnfall Depths really kicked me out of their pack but then I would be lying. The reason why I came back early is because I was missing my darling cousin." I can't help but be sarcastic as I put my arm around his shoulder.

He removes my arm from his shoulder and while glaring at Charles, asks me, "Who is he?"

"He is the Beta of the Dawnfall Depths Pack," I answer, emphasizing the word "Beta." Joshua rolls his eyes. "I'll see you later, darling cousin," I say ironically and walk in the direction of my house with Charles.

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When Charles and I reach my home, I knock at the front door. Mom answers the door and when she sees me, she screams my name happily and envelopes me in a bone-crushing hug. I also hug her with the same amount of strength. Before we really crush each other's bones, we pull away from the hug. "It's so nice to see you," she says to me with a smile. I can't help but smile back at her.

"It feels as if I'm seeing you after ages," I tell her.

She turns to Charles and says, "Hello Beta Charles."

"Hello Mrs. Turner," replies Charles. Mom invites us both inside the house but Charles politely refuses and says that he just came to drop me off. He bids farewell. After watching him head towards the direction of his pack, Mom and I get inside the house. I look around and it feels good to be back in my house after a long time.

"Mom, who is at the door?" Christina asks as she enters the living room. When her gaze falls on me, she screams my name happily, runs towards me and hugs me. I hug her too. After pulling away from the hug, she says, "I missed you so much."

"I missed you more than you missed me," I tell her.

"No, I missed you more," she argues.

"No, I missed you more."

"No, I missed you more—" Christina gets interrupted by Mom.

"Christina, your favorite Disney movie is coming on the television. Don't you want to watch it?" Mom asks.

"Yes!" Christina exclaims excitedly. "But I will watch it with Chriselda."

"Okay," I say.

"Christina, you switch on the television. Chriselda will join you in a few minutes," Mom says. I look at Mom confusingly. She looks at me and says, "I need to talk to you." She goes to her room and I follow her. Once inside her room, she closes the door. She sits on the bed and gestures for me to sit beside her. I do as she wants.

"So, what do you want to talk to me?" I ask her.

"You said that you won't return until and unless you know why your mate is denying you. And you have returned within a week. So, should I take this as a sign that you finally know the reason why your mate is denying you?" She asks.

I look away from her and without feeling any emotions, I tell her, "I don't have a mate."

Author's Note: MERRY CHRISTMAS, guys! :) So, how was this chapter? I'm really looking forward to reading your comments! As I've given you guys a Christmas present in the form of Chapter 22, can you guys also give me a Christmas present by recommending this story to as many people as you can who are werewolf lovers and who would like to read a unique story? :)