

Chapter 38

~GABRIELLA~

I can't get the image of Kane out of my head. It's not because I like him; no, I already have a mate. From the moment I saw him, I felt something for him. I couldn't stand to watch anyone hurt him; seeing him break brought pain to my heart. It's the reason why I stopped Maya's brothers from hurting him. It was true that I knew Maya would hurt more after knowing her brothers killed her mate, but that wasn't my only reason for stepping in. I couldn't stand seeing anyone harm that man. He was already in a lot of pain from learning that his mate was dead. Austin and James were too blinded by the pain of losing their sister that they couldn't see what I saw.

He was devastated; he looked like his life had been taken away from him. I've seen that look before, and it's from a man who was in love, and his heart had been ripped out of his chest. There is no doubt in my mind that Kane loved Maya. They were mates; after all, no one could fight the mate bond; I would know after everything I've gone through since the first time I met my mate, the love of my life, Arthur. He is looking at me right now, trying to read me, trying to understand me. I'm happy that he took my side today, but I expected no less from him. After our troubles of fighting to be together and finally making it happen with the help of our friends, life had been good to us. I've never been this in love.

"Why did you stop Austin from killing Kane?" Arthur asks me. I know that he's been waiting a while to ask me this question; it's been on his mind a bit now; I was waiting for it. I also know that this has been bothering everyone else around me. They were frustrated by the fact that I chose to protect the man they thought killed Maya.

I couldn't control my actions even if I wanted to. The moment I saw him, I felt an instant bond with him. Not the kind one would think for a lover but the kind one would think for their family. He felt like family to me. Everything about him screamed to me that I should know him. Seeing him in pain with no one by his side to comfort him was torture. So many things about him stood out to me, so many things that felt familiar.

There was also the apparent fact that he was a hybrid like me, half-vampire, half-wolf. He also shared a close resemblance to me; even though no one seemed to recognize this, I did the moment I saw him. I knew that he's supposedly Alpha Eric's son, but I don't think so.

I think there is a good chance that Eric lied to Kane about him being his son. I believe, and I'm almost one hundred percent sure, that Kane is my long-lost brother. The brother that was separated from me, my twin. When we were taken from our parents, we were separated, and while my parents found me, my brother was never found. . . Until now.

Everyone seems to think that he killed Maya, but I saw the look on his face when it was mentioned that Maya could be dead. There is no way that he faked that reaction. His life fell out of his body the moment he learned that. He looked like he didn't have a reason to live anymore. Austin and his family were too blinded by rage and emotional pain to see this. They hated Kane with a passion for everything he's done to Maya. But he was already paying for all the wrongs he'd done. I could see that clearly.

He was just as heartbroken as they were with the news of what happened to Maya, maybe even more. She was his mate, after all. He did hurt her in the past, I know this from everything I've learned of the matter so far, but if he wanted to kill her, I believe he would have done it a long time ago. He tortured her, but the truth remained that Kane did not once try to kill Maya the first time he kidnapped her. If he was planning to do it all along, why did he choose to do it now when his pack was almost wiped out?

I knew that I was right. Kane did not kill Maya; he did not kill the woman he loved.

"Gabriella?" Arthur calls out to me once more, reminding me that he'd asked me a question that I was yet to answer. "You're acting strangely. Do you know Kane from somewhere? Were you two friends? Did he help you take care of orphans? I can't think of any reason why you'll protect someone like him. It's unlike you. You don't protect murderers; you've never done anything like this before."

I take a deep breath and face my mate, "I think that Kane may be my long-lost brother."

Arthur's face turns to shock at my words; he is silent for a long time before he finally gets the strength to speak. "Your long-lost brother?" he asks.

I nod and take a few steps towards him, "I didn't want to say anything before to anyone because I have no proof. The only explanation I can think of is that he's a hybrid and shares similar physical qualities to me. That's all the proof I have to offer anyone right now. Until I find out more about him, I'm afraid that I can't tell this to anyone else. I don't want to make such a strong claim, and it turns out that I'm wrong in the end. All I know is that my heart tells me it's him, he's my brother, and I must protect him. I won't let anyone hurt him, not Austin, James, or Hunter; no one will hurt my brother. I will tell my other siblings about this, but I do not plan on telling my parents until I find all the proof I can get. When I do, everyone will know the truth. Everyone will know that Kane is my brother."

Arthur sighs and leans over to kiss my forehead, "if you believe that he is your brother, I will help you protect him. But I'm afraid that will be difficult. I've gotten word from Austin that Kane was ambushed. We don't know from who, but there is nothing left of him or his people back where he lived. It's believed that whoever ambushed them has taken them for enslaved people; that's all we know for now. As you know, Austin and his family couldn't care less what happened to Kane. We may be the only ones willing to free him unless we can convince the others to help us."

I was not angry with Austin or his family; what Kane did to Maya initially was wrong. Even though he did it to avenge Eric's death, it didn't make what he did any better. The important thing is that he realized his mistake and was willing to make up for the wrong he did.

Whoever took him when he was at his lowest, they were nothing but cowards. I will find them; I will find out who took my brother and when I do; I will make them pay.

