

The Viking's Mate Hunt

Chapter 20 A mate mark

"That's the deal? So, I have to follow you back and trust that you let me go in 5 years?"

"Basically, yes. I need to mark you for it to be believable, but the mark has weakened these last decades, so it's nothing to worry about. Time is different here. We age differently, so five years isn't that bad. The next time the portal opens, I will be Alpha. I will be the one in charge of picking up the new batch of girls. I can take you back."

"Fine, that scribble some mark on me and get that part over, but how am I supposed to know you will hold your part of the deal?"

"Well, it's a little more than just a mark. I'll have to bite you."

A shudder sparkled down my spine; I don't know why. Bite me? Why does that sound so alluring? No, it's not! He can scribble something on me if he absolutely must mark me.

"Hah. Nope, that will leave a scar! You can scribble something on me or something, write "mine" even. That should be clear enough!"

Goosebumps appeared on my skin as his laughter filled my ears.

"What?"

I swallowed my irritation as he inched closer. Still, the amusement played on the corner of his lips.

"No, it won't do. You need to have a mate mark, and yes, it will leave a scar, but the connection is weak. Weaker than ever before, so no worries. It won't grow stronger if we don't nurture it."

"Mate mark? No, come up with something else! What is it anyway? What do you mean it's weaker than ever?"

He still seemed so amused, and it irked me. At the same time, a warmth spread in my chest as his intense eyes were locked on mine. Nervous, I felt

nervous as he inched closer. As the heat of his body spread to mine. So cocky, so incredibly sure of himself, but I could not look away. He began to speak, and my heart leaped in my chest.

“A mate mark, my dear human, is a claim. Not only a scribbled tattoo but a deeper connection. Their souls intervene, and their hearts and mind create bonds. The mark changes your smell, telling everyone else you are taken. If you are claimed by someone else, nobody will touch you or look at you for too long.”

It sounded like a fairy tale love story, both surreal and intimate. Every word that left his lips brushed against my skin, invisible claws reaching for my heart and mind. Soothing, tempting, and breathtaking.

“Through the mark, I will feel you. Know if you need help if you are hurt or scared. Happiness, sadness, and fears are shared through the bond.”

I couldn't move a muscle as he spoke, he leaned over me, and his hot breath fanned the skin on my neck as his finger made lazy circles on my sensitive skin. He was showing me where the mark was supposed to be.

“Here, on the most sensitive part of your neck. It will be a bundle of nerves; the mere touch will make you moan. Desperate for me to extinguish that burning need between your thighs.”

His warm lips hovered over my skin, hot breath dampened my neck, and tiny lightning bolts flashed through my body. Like the bite, he wanted to give me already pulsed on my skin—a promise on my skin, an unbreakable bond.

“Nope! No, not doing that!”

I crawled backward, pushing myself from the ground with my feet desperately needing to create space between us. The heat swirled between my legs and flushed my cheeks. Too close, he was too close, and apparently, I was in desperate need of some action! My god, I melted like fucking butter beside him, and I clenched my thighs together, trying to forget the burning need. Fuck! I need to get laid, not by a cocky puppy with claws!

“Get a pen or something, and you're not biting me or creating anything between us! That sounds very permanent; I'm not going back to having to feel every time your horny for the rest of my life!”

“You know, I don’t need a mate bond or mark for that, right? I can smell you!”

He winked and inched closer again; I felt mortified! What the fuck! Jumping up to both feet and glaring at him.

“Fuck you! No deal!”

All amusement left his face as he stood up and looked at me,

“Well, we have two days to figure it out! There isn’t a way around it! And if you think you can drag out the time, you are wrong!”

His eyes flickered, and he took deep breaths like he needed to calm himself, and I eyed him carefully, almost waiting for him to snap or jump me. But he did neither.

“This is not a good place to stay; the cave belongs to bears. So, let’s pick up what we need and get down to one of the streams.”

It wasn’t really a question, and I hated myself for feeling disappointed as he turned his back on me and started putting out the fire. I liked my little cave; it felt safe, and, well, I guess it wasn’t if a bear suddenly came walking in. I didn’t have much to take with me, just my two pocket bags. I didn’t even have my knife! Remembering that, I scowled at him from the corner of my eye. I need to earn what trust I can, as fast as possible. Either so he would give me my knife back, or at least so I have a chance to run. Right before the time is out!

I felt like a captive without restraints. He walked in front of me, leading the way, but I felt his eyes on me. Always watching my move, listening to every step I took. I couldn’t even stop too long before he reacted. There was nowhere else to go than after him. I watched his wide back as we trudged through the forest. I didn’t see it earlier, but it was covered in small scars. Like claw marks had once sliced open, his back had faded with time. Muscles bulged beneath them, moved, and tightened with every step.

I didn’t step out of line and didn’t try to run; I was too tired. But I haven’t given up, my head still working in high gear, spinning and twisting each opportunity. Not yet, not now. I can’t outrun him, I need to use my time wisely. Chose my moment carefully and maybe learn as much as I could. Was there any other way to go back? If I run now if I manage to stay away for five years. Would he take me back for the right price?