

Mated To Five Alpha Brothers

Chapter 18

There is some kind of twisted comfort to be garnered from someone else's misfortune. Particularly, when that person has a history of playing the antagonist in your life. So, I was rather surprised when the news of Jennifer being fired didn't bring the kind of joy I would have expected. Instead, the one feeling that overshadowed everything else was the mystery that connected the incident to the man who was standing in front of me, looking utterly bemused.

"You fired Jennifer, didn't you?" As much as I tried to sound neutral, the irritation that was threatening to make an appearance, managed to seep through into my voice.

Somewhere in the distance, the receding wail of a siren was the only sound to intrude upon the silence that followed my question. Seconds went by before the first signs of a response settled on his handsome features, the creases of confusion smoothing out with ease. An air of nonchalance overtook his posture, shoulders shrugging with indifference as he stared right back.

"Yes."

My jaws clenched in subtle impatience at his paltry response, my carefully withheld temper cracking at the corners. In truth, I could not comprehend why I was angry in the first place. If anything, the appropriate response would have been to thank the man for getting rid of a bully, who had a track record of abusing their seniority and power in the workplace. But here I was, annoyed that everything surrounding him had a nasty habit of catching me off guard.

And I wasn't the type, who enjoyed surprises. "Well? Are you going to tell me why?"

A fleeting shadow of something akin to frustration passed his face as his hand moved to pinch the bridge of his nose, breathing out in a loud exhale. Running his hand through his hair, he looked up at me with brows furrowed and an accusing gaze. "Here's what I would like to know Mia. Why do you always insist on jumping to conclusions before you have all the facts?"

My mouth dropped open in disbelief, the sting of criticism kicking me in the gut and forcing the air out of my lungs. How dare he accuse me of something he is equally guilty of? He had walked in here and beat up my friend assuming that something was going on. And now he tells me that I'm acting based on assumptions and not facts?! The gall! A volatile mix of anger and hurt sizzled to the forefront as I prepared to retaliate.

But the words died, just as quickly as they were formed when I noticed his eyes suddenly flash gold, the silver rapidly consumed by the darkness, making his eyes appear black. An odd chill settled in the space between us, thoughts that I wanted to express long forgotten, as I stared into those icy pits.

I shivered, the hairs on the back of my neck rising as I waited in dread to face his wrath. The sounds and the warmth from the day outside evaporated into the vacuum that choked the air around us.

To my surprise, however, he remained silent. As the forced calm between us stretched, my insides squirmed uncomfortably, preferring to be on the receiving end of his anger rather than having to deal with this awkwardness that hung over us like a dark cloud. Twice, I wanted to speak my mind but a voice inside warned me against that decision.

When he finally decided to speak, I was left confused about his emotional state. Contrary to his intimidating exterior, there was an unexpected hint of sadness in his voice that pulled at my heartstrings.

If you are not reading this book from the website: novel5s.com then you are reading a pirated version with incomplete content. Please visit novel5s.com and search the book title to read the entire book for free

"When I gave you the job, you questioned my intentions. When the rumors started, you shut me out. When I fire the person responsible, you stand here and question me like I'm some kind of low-life criminal. Why? What have I done to earn that kind of distrust?"

I was definitely not prepared for this line of questioning. On the one hand, I was itching to have a go at him, my wounded pride seeking retribution and on the other hand, I wanted to genuinely understand where he was coming from.

My heart clenched painfully at the hurt in his voice, I decided to work past my anger and let his words sink in. The annoyance that I had felt, began to slowly ebb as I started to see things from his perspective. The weight of the truth came crashing down when I realized that I had never truly given him a chance to explain anything from the moment we had met. Always doubting his motives and intentions, I had failed to look past my own bias and insecurities.

I recalled the time when I had learned the truth about why I had managed to keep the job. Instead of talking to him, I deduced that the reason was that he wanted to take advantage of me. So, I went ahead and accused him. When faced with the rumor, I had decided to avoid him, concerned more about my reputation amongst my peers than picking up the phone and getting the facts straight. Finally, standing here, I was blaming him once again for firing a person I hated instead of simply asking what had happened to cause it.

As these thoughts whirled in my mind, a feeling of shame and guilt overwhelmed me. I had let my past dictate my choices and actions yet again. And what if, this time, I had chased away the one man I felt intensely for? My chest constricted painfully at that thought.

I was so caught up in my own head, that I didn't realize he was still talking. My mind immediately snapped back to what he was saying.

".....You know... I have patiently waited for you to see me as someone who cares about you and someone that you can trust. But now... I'm not so sure..."

Something about his tone and the way his shoulders seemed to sag sent a wave of panic through me. Did I push him too far? Was he going to leave? Has he had enough? My gut churned as anxiety raced through my system, elevating my heart rate to the point, where I feared it would explode in my chest.

My whole body began to shake as the words came tumbling out, incoherent and half-formed. My voice shook, tears forming rapidly at the corners, as all the hurt, heartache, frustration, fear and shame slammed down at once. "I-I don't know... this...it's happening so fast... scares me... these feelings... I.. don't know.."

The tears were falling in earnest at this point. My anxiety peaking at the thought that I might have ruined something wonderful caused a fresh round of panic to hit me in full force. Something in me felt like it was being torn to shreds, the possibility of him leaving striking fear into my soul.

Through my blurred vision, I noticed him suddenly grip his chest with a hiss while looking at me with wide eyes. He seemed to be in some kind of pain. But before I could blink the tears away to get a good look, I was encased into a strong pair of arms.

Lost in the world of this story? Make sure you're on Novel5s.com to catch every twist and turn. The next chapter awaits, exclusively on our site. Dive in now!

"Oh, baby... shhh... it's alright... I've got you... I'm not going anywhere... I'm so sorry... shhh..." His words were like manna from heaven, feeding my soul with the warmth and security that it so desperately craved. His hands running soothing circles on my back helped ease the panic that had overwhelmed my senses. I pushed my face further into his chest, my tears staining his shirt, never wanting to let go. And there we stood, wrapped in each other's arms as the blustering noises of the city returned to their normal volume within the walls of the room.

Finally, when my tears had completely subsided, I looked up to see his golden eyes strained with concern. A stab of guilt had me reaching up to caress his face, hoping to comfort him in the way that he had comforted me. A low rumble sounded from his chest as he closed his eyes to my touch. It was the most endearing thing that I had ever had the chance to witness. A hulk of a man, purring like a contented household cat.

"I'm sorry for constantly doubting you."

His eyes opened at my words, the silver-grey shining with tenderness as he gazed down at me. My chest tightened at the overwhelming care and gentleness that flowed into my body from his. Fighting to control my tears, I continued hastily, "I should have just spoken to you... instead of... making up my own theories in my head. I guess it's just...."

I swallowed hard, a large bubble of emotions rising up in my throat, threatening to burst my barely-held composure. I had no idea why I was this emotional but the thought that I could lose him was traumatising.

"It-it's just easier...I guess... to believe the worst about someone. I haven't had many positive experiences when it comes to men. I have been let down so many times that I've literally lost count. But that's no excuse to have assumed the worst about you. And for that... I'm sorry"

He watched me intently for a few seconds before lowering his face and meeting my lips. I eagerly welcomed him, relishing in the comfort that came with the kiss. My body sighed in relief as his lips expressed his affection and loyalty in the most tender way possible.

Gripping my face between his hands, he broke the kiss and pinned me with a serious gaze. "I would never hurt you, Mia. You are my everything. And I understand that these feelings are confusing and that you're scared. But I promise you that there is nothing to fear. Just trust it. Trust me. That's all I ask. And also promise me that next time you feel confused or you hear something weird, you will talk to me first before deciding anything. Agreed?"

My heart skipped a beat at his words. Standing on my tiptoes, I met his lips with a tender kiss before parting to speak. "I promise. But only if you do the same."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, you did beat up my friend. If you had bothered to stop and ask, I would have told you that he was just my friend visiting from Washington. And that there was nothing happening between us. But no. You had to go all Rambo on the guy."

He burst into a fit of laughter, his whole body shaking against mine. "Touché. And I'm sorry about that." Shoving his face into my neck, he inhaled deeply and began to nip at that "weak spot", making me moan in delight. "However, you do belong to me, Mia. So, expecting me to act civil when there is a shirtless man running around in your apartment is a big ask."

A hearty laugh passed through me at his possessiveness. Bloody caveman. His eyes twinkled as he raised his head and connected our foreheads. The mutual feeling of trust and relief passes through us with ease. Everything felt right again.

However, I sighed in defeat as our tender moment was interrupted by the loud blaring of his phone. Closing his eyes, he took in a deep breath before walking over to his phone that was on the kitchen counter. And as he looked down at the flashing screen, his whole posture changed in an instant. His shoulders grew stiff as his muscles bulged, straining against his shirt. Looking up at me he raised his index finger to his lips, gesturing me to keep silent.

Nodding my head in understanding, my lips pulled into a thin line, wondering who the caller was and why they had such an effect on him.

As he raised the phone to his ear, his voice took on a professional tone.

"James?"

There was silence as he appeared to be listening intently. His brows furrowed in the middle before a look of irritation passed his face.

"What? Why do you need me? Send Kole."

Silence descended once again while he listened to whatever this James person was saying on the other end. Suddenly his eyes flashed gold as he cried out in frustration.

"For fucks sake! Fine!"

Ending the call, his golden eyes locked with mine. His face was switching between emotions so fast that it was hard for me to decipher what was actually running through his mind. I didn't have to wait long for the answer though. Running his fingers through his hair and gripping it in frustration, his voice came out in a growl.

"Baby. I'm sorry but I have to go"