

# Mated To Five Alpha Brothers

## Chapter 30

A frisson of terror slithered down my spine as I watched the retreating backs of the men exiting the room one after the other. Every inch of my body was on edge, twitching and trembling nervously at the prospect of being trapped in the same room as this homicidal maniac. But it was with absolute dread that I realized the true extent of my predicament: that as long as I was held captive in this hellhole, such instances were going to become a regular theme and I would have no choice but to face it.

"Hello Mia"

The silky drawl of Alex's voice caressed my ears, sending an equal measure of fear and pleasure rippling down my body. Fuck! I shuddered before tearing my gaze away from the door to face the unearthly creature that stood before me.

Dressed in an all-black suit, with the shirt temptingly unbuttoned to his chest, Alex looked ready to dominate any red carpet-event. His jet black hair that fell over his electric blue eyes, added to the effortless charm that radiated off him. My eyes trailed eagerly over his broad chest before lowering down to the layers of muscles that were packed behind that shirt. I bit into my lower lip when my eyes slid down a few inches to those well-fitted trousers that emphasized one particular area with clear precision. Holy fuck!

"See something you like?"

I immediately jerked up, heat rising to my cheeks as a feeling of shame quickly tore through my conscience. But when I glanced at his face, my eyes widened at the slight upturn of his lips and the mirth dancing behind those blue eyes. My jaw dropped in shock. Is he being funny? The fear that had gripped me, slowly turned to confusion as his smile expanded upon seeing my reaction. I was startled when I realized that there was nothing malicious about his smile at all. It was a genuine one. What the hell is going on?

"You look ravishing tonight. I'm glad to see you wearing the dress that I picked out."

Suddenly, all I saw was red. Perhaps, I had finally reached my wits end. Or perhaps it was Alex saying that it made him happy. Or perhaps it was the anger and shame that I felt for constantly gravitating towards these men who had done nothing but cause me pain. Whatever the reason was, it didn't matter anymore.

The fear that I held for the man in front of me was momentarily forgotten as my eyes narrowed and the words charged out of me with heavy sarcasm. "Well, it's not like I had much of a choice in the matter, did I? Your goons didn't really give me a chance to pack a suitcase before shoving me in that car. And this dress is the only thing I was given to wear. So if I were you, I would refrain from feeling overly smug over such ill-informed conclusions."

Had I not been paying close attention to his face, I would have missed the way his lip quirked in the corner by a fraction and the way his brow rose a tiny inch in response to my outburst.

"Be that as it may, you still look divine."

His reaction and his words completely threw me off guard. I had anticipated his roaring temper or maybe even a slap but appreciative glances and compliments from Alex were definitely not what I was expecting. My fear of my foolish words quickly faded as I felt a blush come over my cheeks and ears. My heart fluttered giddily, bathing in the attention that I was receiving. Get a fucking grip! Desperately trying to force myself out of these feelings, I decided to redirect the conversation to the matter at hand.

"W-what did you want to talk about?"

"Ah yes. Why don't we get comfortable first?"

Gracefully removing his hands out of his pockets, he pointed towards the desk in the middle of the room. Hesitantly, I made my way to one of the chairs while Alex took the one behind the desk facing me. And just as I sat down and began to adjust my dress in order to get comfortable, my breath hitched as a low growl reached my ears. Hurriedly glancing up with worry, I noticed him staring at my breasts, his eyes flashing a brilliant gold before he turned away and took a deep breath.

I wasn't sure what to make of his behavior. Normally, when Alex's eyes had done that in the past, I had been on the receiving end of his cruelty but that was not what I was sensing right now. He was giving off a friendly aura. Like he wanted me to be comfortable around him.

Placing his arms on the surface of the desk and clasping his hands together in front of him, Alex finally opened his eyes. They were back to being his original blue and he appeared to be totally at ease as he studied me with interest before his features morphed into one of regret. "Mia... I want to start off by saying how sorry I am. For everything. I was arrogant and rude but most of all, I was ignorant and I let my temper get in the way. I shouldn't have hit you or treated you in the way that I have. That was wrong. I was wrong."

I listened in utter disbelief as Alex continued to speak in a solemn tone. Is this really happening? Somehow, I never pictured Alex to be the type to take accountability for his actions. But yet here he was. Doing just that.

"... Because the more time I've had to think, I have come to realize that you are but a victim in all this. Not the perpetrator. You had no idea what was going on and I don't think you still do. And that's why I want to tell you how sorry I am – how sorry we all are for putting you through this. You didn't deserve it."

Words would not be able to express the shock that I was experiencing in this instant. I felt frozen. My perception of Alex being this evil incarnate was chipping away at the corners as I felt the sincere effort from his side. But there was still a part of me that didn't trust him, leaving me in a state of suspicion at the sudden turn of events.

"I don't think an apology is going to cut it, Alex. Definitely not for kidnap and torture."

"Yes, I understand. Which is why we are more than happy to compensate for the grief that we have caused."

"Compensate? What do you mean?"

And although he remained very still, a subtle change came over his form. There was an undercurrent of excitement behind the eyes that roamed my face as he leaned further into the desk. "Like I mentioned before, you were dragged into our family mess and it's only fair that we give you... a little something for all the trouble and inconvenience."

"Like what?"

I was stunned when Alex flashed me a smile. A full-on gorgeous smile reached his eyes, making the blue almost glow in the dim lighting. He then proceeded to open a drawer and pull out some papers which he gently placed in front of me. "We decided that a sum of two million dollars along with a new place in your name will be adequate compensation for everything that you have been through since you got here. Of course, the money will be paid to you however you wish - cash, transfer, whatever. And to make up for my poor conduct in particular, I will even throw in a brand new car of your choosing, clothes, jewelry... you name it and it's yours. All I ask in return... is that you reject me... and my brothers and go your own way. That's it."

My mind blanked for a second at the end of his little speech. I blinked several times, unable to form a coherent thought or sentence. But suddenly, the penny dropped. Everything began to click into place. The gifts, the compliments, the apology, and everything in between. My heart twisted painfully as the hurt slashed through my chest.

"So... all this was just to get me to agree? A bribe?"

He huffed a short laugh, his eyes still holding that strange excitement. "Bribe? No Mia. Let's just say that this is a taste of my generosity. I can give you anything you want. You just agree and we all go back to our lives like nothing ever happened."

"Uh... So let me get this straight. You are paying me to... leave this place?"

Alex sighed heavily before scoffing. "Yes. And also for the rejection part that I mentioned and to also stay away from us... especially Thomas. You will never see him or try to get in contact with him once you leave this place. Oh... and the money is also to ensure that you keep silent about everything that happened. Although I'm not too worried about that. I'm sure you humans have something called a nuthouse where people get thrown into when they start babbling on about monsters that don't exist. Am I right?"

Another stab of hurt went through me as the entire truth was laid bare to see. Alex hadn't miraculously turned into a decent being. All of this had been nothing but a charade to convince me to agree to his terms. To buy my co-operation. Although I was tempted by the opportunity to get away from this place by gladly accepting every one of his conditions, there was only one problem.

"Fine. But Thomas leaves with me. I'm not going anywhere without him. Not for that million or a hundred million."

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The excitement that had been vibrantly dancing behind those blue orbs slowly began to fade, replaced with the usual coldness that I was used to seeing on Alex every time I was in his presence. "Look... I'm trying to do the right thing here by giving you the chance to go back to your life. And a cushy life at that if you take what I'm offering. But here you are – testing my patience while at the same time proving just how foolish you really are."

An odd chill held me in its grip, forbidding me from retaliating even though I was seething on the inside. There was an invisible pressure that pushed against my own will, demanding my silence and obedience. I felt the fear come back in full force, unsure of what was happening to me as I helplessly watched his eyes flash that dangerous gold.

"...But then again, I doubt Tommy explained much to you about our world. Hmm. Maybe that's why you don't know what you're saying. Never mind. Let me give you a quick run-down of what would happen if you don't take up my offer. Shall I?"

And like a puppet, I nodded obediently. The betrayal I was feeling was turning into a constant ache on the inside. For a second, I thought Alex had somehow changed. That he was genuinely sorry for everything that he had done. How stupid could I be? I cursed myself for forgetting what a sick monster he truly was. His niceties and gifts were just a form of manipulation just like whatever threat he was preparing to hurl in my direction right now.

"My little human. What you must first understand about our world is that it is built on power and hierarchy. Only the strong truly survive and thrive. The weak will be crushed. And where would you fit in that context if you chose to stay here with Thomas? Because unlike you, Thomas can't leave. His wolf needs a pack to keep from going rogue. So if you stay, then you would be nothing but a sheep amongst wolves. A constant liability. You are weak, helpless, and frankly – downright pathetic. Thomas will have to risk his safety over and over again to protect you."

Studying me for a moment, he scoffed with indignation. "And what can you really give him in return? You would never fit in. You would never be considered as one of us. You can never become a part of this pack or contribute towards the strength and growth of this pack. And because of that, you will forever remain an outcast and slowly you will end up dragging Thomas down with you until you are both wallowing in misery and regret. And oh... don't even get me started on the complications that come with being tied to a male wolf. A Beta wolf at that."

He paused as he took in my appearance. Cocking his head to the side with a smirk flying across his lips, he carefully observed my reaction. I was certain that my face had gone pale with how numb I was feeling on the inside. I felt my heart sink to depths where I feared it would never resurface again. Was it true? Is there no future for Thomas and me? Alex seemed satisfied with whatever it was that he found in my expression before he carried on, his voice powerful and confident. Like a predator that sensed its victory just before sinking its teeth in one final, brutal grip.

"You would never be able to truly satiate him. You see, our sex drive is not the same as a human. It is violent, primal, and most definitely – unappeasable with just one round of mild human fucking. Only another wolf would be able to withstand and satisfy the "intensity" with which we fuck. And poor Tommy. He would have to resign himself to a life of unsatisfactory copulation if he is stuck with you. And that is not even the worst of it. As a human, you would most likely never bear his children. And if by some unlikely miracle you do happen to conceive, there is a high chance that the child will never carry the wolf gene nor will it carry the Beta gene. So not only will my brother be denied good sex but he will also forfeit passing on his family's legacy. Now... tell me... is that what you want for him, Mia? Are you truly that selfish?"

Tears were raining down my face without me even realizing it. My heart felt burdened with a piercing sorrow that was beginning to consume me whole. I felt like I couldn't breathe, my chest tightened to the point where I felt like I was on the verge of collapse. The thought of leaving Thomas was like taking a knife to my chest and the thought of condemning him to a life of misery with a partner who could never be his equal was like committing murder.

Both of which I was incapable of doing.

My mind was spinning with doubts and questions. What if I took the money and left without Thomas? On the one hand, I would lead a comfortable life but I would lose the one thing that mattered most. And what is money and wealth without the one special person to share it with?

Besides, I knew that if I left with or without the money, there would always be a gaping hole in my life that would never heal. A void that no person or material possession could ever fill. Because with love for Thomas was too strong to ignore and pretend like it never happened. I realized that while I was sitting on that plane, filled with agony when I thought I would never get to share my life with him. And also, the time when I thought I had almost lost him. I remembered the pain. It felt like my soul was being forcefully ripped out of me in that instant.

And as that memory entered my mind, something in me snapped. Who the fuck did this asshole think he is? Telling me that my life with Thomas will be nothing but miserable? Fucking manipulative bastard! There may be truth in some things that he was saying but I'll be damned if I buy into his bullshit one more time. Fool me once... but not a second time.

Raising the back of my hand to wipe away the tears, I stared at the creature that sat opposite me with disdain. While there was a good amount of fear lingering somewhere in my gut for the monster, all I felt now was a burning hot rage. This was who he truly was. Flattery, tricks, manipulation, and a sick sadistic side summed up Alex in a nutshell.

And boy. I was never going to let myself forget it.

"And is Thomas aware of these.... pitfalls that you talk off... if he ends up with me?"

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Alex's eyes flashed gold, an enraged snort escaping his nostrils. He looked like a bull ready to charge the matador.

"As much as I love my brother, he can be a fool sometimes. He takes the whole "mate" thing seriously. Puts too much stock into these tales of the Moon Goddess and the mate bond and other such childish notions. And because of that, he would risk everything to be with you – his mate. He would betray this family, break us apart, and let this empire crumble beneath our feet. A mistake that his brothers including me will not stand for. Which is why I am here; I love my brother and I want a better future for him. A future where he can truly be happy. He doesn't see it now but that's because he doesn't see the bigger picture. Your influence has made him rather... short-sighted."

My eyes narrowed, taking in his demeanor. Aside from the mistrust that I already had when it came to him, there was something in me that did not believe that he was doing this for Thomas. Or for Thomas' happiness. An instinct deep inside told me that these reasons that he was giving were not the entire truth. Besides, this "mate" word was coming up too often for me to ignore. A niggle in my brain said this could have something to do with it.

"What is this mate thing anyway?"

His irritated expression cracked. A look of surprise crossed his face, his eyes widening at my question. His brows met in the middle as he looked at me in confusion.

"Did Tommy not -" But his face changed, a cool façade taking over his confused features as he stopped his sentence before continuing with a nonchalant tone. "It's nothing important. What's important right now is your decision. I think I have given you enough information about the consequences involved if you stayed here."

Bringing his hand down to the papers in front of me and giving it a slight shake, he continued. "And I have also explained the life you can have if you sign these papers. So, tell me, little human. What is your choice?"

I knew I couldn't trust Alex or anything he said. Watching him wait for my response with an indifferent look on his face, I knew better. There was a burning impatience and a dangerous rage lurking just behind the cool demeanor he was portraying.

Taking in a deep breath with my mind set firmly on how I was going to proceed, I looked at him calmly. "I will take my decision after I have heard what Thomas has to say. I would be an idiot if I chose to decide the fate of my relationship based on the words of a man who expresses concern for the same brother whom he had no qualms beating to a pulp. The same man, who only two days ago wanted me buried six feet under. Who threatens, tricks, and manipulates to get what he wants. Notice a pattern here?"

I immediately regretted my sassy tone the minute I noticed his eyes turn black and a menacing growl rip through his chest. His body seemed to vibrate as he jumped to his feet and leaned right up to my face, our noses almost touching as I sat panicking in my seat.

Suddenly, he inhaled. His eyes fell closed as he breathed deeply. I noticed a shudder run through his body before he opened his eyes and gave me a psychotic smile, his eyes looking dark as the night.

"You can't fool me, my dear. Your witty answers can't hide the smell of fear that is soaking through your skin. And I must confess - it really turns me on."

An involuntary whimper escaped my lips. I was truly terrified at this point and there was no hiding it. My palms felt cold and clammy and my heart raced as I watched his smile become wider, his canines extending past his lips while he ran the tip of his tongue over one of the razor-sharp incisors.

"I thought you were smarter than this Mia. But I guess you proved me wrong."

I gasped as his eyes turned that foggy grey, his head tilting upwards for a few seconds before being replaced by the black inky darkness. Still smiling in a sinister way, he sat back on his chair, his fingers drumming the desk in tandem. I could hear hurried footsteps behind the double doors and just before it could burst open, Alex threw me one last wicked smile, his voice freezing my heart and sending a chill down my spine.

"Oh Mia... You foolish little girl!"