

Mated To Five Alpha Brothers

Chapter 43

Thomas

The lingering smell of arousal assailed my senses as soon as I stepped through the cabin door, my footsteps freezing at the doorway as my mind reeled with shock and confusion. Caught off guard, my wolf surged to the front, causing every bone in my body to shift as he prepared to take control and meet the non-existent threat that had caused the sudden disruption to my mood.

Holding him back, I took a deep breath, analyzing and cataloging the different smells permeating the main room. To my dismay, the strongest scent was Mia's intoxicating arousal combined with that of James but it seemed to be a few hours old at least.

Sensing no real threat, my wolf held down, shockingly unperturbed by the smell of another male with his mate. But I, on the other hand, could barely restrain the fury that consumed me completely at the idea of the two of them together.

"What the fuck did you do James? Where is she?" My mind link, filled with a tone of enraged betrayal, reached James without a hitch, suggesting that he was still somewhere in the pack grounds.

There was a pause before his reply came back, guarded, almost cautious, like he was thinking out the words before relaying them. And that thought raised alarm bells in mine.

"She's fine"

James was a master at diffusing tense situations, a diplomat, and a thinker, he could always find his way out of a conflict without stepping on too many toes. But unfortunately for him, I was all too aware of his subtle tactics. And in this moment, with his strong musk invading my space, I had zero tolerance for any of it.

"I won't ask again brother. Where. Is. She?"

A heartbeat of silence followed the question before he responded, his words tumbling out in a hurry. "She was at the head office but Liam is bringing her back now. They should be there any minute."

My body vibrated with a rage like never before. "And what gives any of you the right to take my mate?"

"What gives us the right? You're really asking that question?"

Forcing my beast to keep from shifting and ripping out his throat at the audacity, I snarled into the mind link. "You do not get to lay a claim on her when it benefits you and then push her away when it doesn't, brother. That is not how this works!"

The mind link went silent, a strained stillness pressing on the outer corners as James failed to respond. I could sense his wolf's remorse through the bond but it was the strange sense of nervousness hiding underneath that guilt that prompted me to break the silence.

"What happened here at the cabin, James?"

Another uncomfortable spell of silence followed my patience wearing thin with each second that passed. But just as I prepared to project, his abrupt answer reached my mind.

"Nothing happened."

I snorted in disgust. The fact that I was drowning in their mingled scent was proof that something had happened but a large part of me wanted to hear it from him. Wanted another reason to prove that they were not capable of being good mates for Mia. Proof that she shouldn't need them.

"Your words reek of deceit just as sure as this room reeks of your betrayal brother."

The nervousness that had emanated from him increased at my words. His wolf almost whined when my own beast pushed through the bond in an attempt to force him to project the secrets that James was trying so hard to hide. But instead, I hit a wall when he suddenly shut me out, clearly unwilling to divulge what had happened between Mia and him.

I knew that the battle was lost. James was not the type that could be persuaded or goaded into giving answers. Not unless I was stronger, which I knew I wasn't. Taking a breath, I shut off the mind link with a final, promising threat. "If I find out that something happened to her or that you did something to hurt her...mark my words brother...you won't live to see another day."

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With his voice dispelled from my mind, I seethed in silent rage, pacing like a caged beast from one end of the room to the other. My mind refused to keep calm, chaotically jumping between what could have transpired and reveling in all the painful ways I could deliver vengeance upon my own flesh and blood. But for all that it managed to conjure, it refused to delve into the idea that Mia had wanted this. Or more precisely, I refused to believe that she wanted this.

My heart skipped a beat when I heard the car turning in the distance, the tires crunching the loose gravel beneath as it made its way closer. Rushing out of the cabin, my heart pounded in my chest at the prospect of seeing my mate. The last few days had been a painful reminder of how empty my life once was before she came and how empty it would be without her in it.

But at the same time, the anticipation and the dread grew, skyrocketing when the car finally came into view, passing the trees that kept our cabin well hidden from sight. I watched, barely taking a breath as it came to a stop. The worry that she wouldn't forgive me was at the forefront of my mind as the door opened and my mate climbed out, a look of surprise written all over her face.

"Mia, are you -" I had been so worried about her well-being that I had not registered the overpowering smell at first. But when a faint breeze blew her scent in my direction, the rest of the sentence died in my throat.

My body grew rigid, muscles locking in place as the weight of the truth came crashing down.

Marcus.

The sweet smell of her wet cunt and the territorial scent of my Alpha, my own brother, knocked the air out of my lungs for the second time today. My stomach churned painfully. The need to either kill something or violently throw up battled away inside as I stared at my mate, despair and disbelief stabbing at my gut repeatedly.

The truth that I had vehemently shied away from was laid bare, forcing me to see, feel, and acknowledge.

She had wanted this. Wanted them.

Out of the corner of my eye, I saw Liam stiffen, his wolf picking up on my distress far quicker than Mia's dulled senses. But she seemed to sense something, perhaps through the bond, when her surprise turned to a frown and she involuntarily took a step back, her body moving behind Liam as if seeking protection. From me.

I couldn't reign in the vicious snarl that tore through my throat, the knowledge that she had been with James and Marcus and was now choosing another male over me was simply too much to take. My beast which had kept still all the while despite sniffing Marcus on his mate, reared his head at the sight of Liam and bared his fangs threateningly.

"Step away from her."

Liam raised his hands, his neck tilting to the side to show submission before he addressed my mate, in a gentle but firm tone. "Mia, go inside."

My hackles rose, another growl of warning rising in my chest at the liberty he was taking with her.

"Calm down Tommy. Let's talk"

Mia glanced between us, her expression one of worry before she gave me an incomprehensible look and made her way to the cabin. Was she worried for me or for Liam?

The uncertainty made my bones shift, my wolf itching to put Liam back in his place and reclaim his mate. But while he raged and snarled, I tracked my mate as she repeatedly glanced back, her scent heavy with guilt and fear.

"Tommy--"

I faced my Gamma, the fury quickly returning at the sight of him. "Don't you dare speak another word! You took her to my brothers behind my back and you stand here now, asking me to calm down? I am going to enjoy ripping you apart before I do the same to them!"

A bolt of fear flashed through his eyes, the corn blue instantly changing yellow as his own wolf reacted to my aggression. But Liam wisely stayed calm as he lowered his head in submission, easing the tension between the beasts.

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"I was ordered by the Alpha to bring her to the office and to keep it from you. You know I would never do that if I wasn't forced to."

His mentioning of Marcus only served to exacerbate the hostility that I was currently feeling toward my best friend but I held myself back, preferring to find out what my Alpha brother was up to instead.

"Why did he want her there?"

"Her friend had been snooping around trying to get more information ever since Mia was brought here. So, Alpha Marcus had Mia convince the female to leave..."

I tried to remember this female that Mia was close to back in Manhattan but could only vaguely recall her face and not much else.

"... and I didn't know any of this until Mia told me on our way back."

My focus shifted back to the cabin, wondering what she was doing inside. Was she upset? Was she happy to see me? Was she missing James or Marcus? Was she thinking of Liam? Was she-

I forced myself to stop, refocusing on the details I needed before I did something I would regret. "And what happened here at the cabin? With James?"

Liam frowned, his stance easing now that he realized that I was more interested in talking than ripping out his throat. His tone, however, was full of concern. "I honestly don't know. Beta James and I came to the cabin to take her to the office and she just started throwing things around...screaming...I've never seen her like this. Beta asked me to wait outside and later when he came out, he told me to take her to the office and that he would follow."

So, James had in fact spent some time with Mia... alone. The jealousy soared to the front, leaving me feeling insecure and weak. Gritting my teeth, I forced the painful words out in spite of knowing that it made me seem like an irrational fool. "And what did James do inside? What did you hear?"

The frown on Liam's face deepened, his look of concern changing to one of confusion and mild disapproval. "Tommy, you have bigger concerns to worry about than what James did...or what the Alpha did. Look I understand--"

"And what would you understand about a mate choosing another over you?"

The moment those words left my mouth, I cringed with regret and embarrassment. Of course, Liam would understand. After all, his chosen mate had left him for an Alpha on the day of their mating.

"I'm sorry... I didn't mean to say that"

He glanced at me; his pain visible on his face as he waved his hand in the air. "It's alright. I get it... But do you?"

"Do I what?"

"Do you understand that Mia needs her mates? That she needs all of you? And that there is nothing wrong with her wanting them or vice versa? By denying the bond and preventing it from running its natural course, you are only inflicting pain on her and on yourselves."

My jaw ached as I bit down hard, trying not to punch my friend in the face for suggesting that I allow my brothers near my mate when they had tortured and mistreated us from the start.

"I cannot accept that."

Liam tilted his head as he regarded me closely for a while. "How does your beast feel? Does he get territorial when you think of your brothers with your mate?"

I looked away, having no response to give. My wolf did not care that my mate had the scent of two males on her. He did not see them as rivals and hence did not view that as an act of betrayal. But my ego clearly did.

"I'm guessing that he doesn't really mind?"

I huffed in irritation. "What's your point?"

He sighed as if he was explaining something simple to a child. "Mia's not in a good way. She doesn't understand what the bond is doing to her and she needs you by her side, supporting her now more than ever. You need to set aside your differences with your brothers--"

"Set aside differences? You make it sound like it's a petty squabble when the four of them have done everything in their power to make her miserable! If Mia's in a bad way, then it's their doing...NOT MINE!"

My heart raced, anger and hurt seizing control as the last bits of my restraint began to unravel.

"You think this is easy for me? I have been cast aside like an unwanted dog. Publicly humiliated by my own blood while the pack offers me pity. Forced to bow down to every other unworthy wolf while my brothers sat back and enjoyed my torment! Unable to provide my mate with everything she deserves while they take what they want from her and throw her to the curb when they fancy! And despite that she wants them! How do you think that makes me feel?!"

Turning away, I set my gaze on the cabin, craving to be back in her arms.

"...and I try so hard...but how can I be there for her when her mere scent drives me insane. My beast claws at my mind night and day, tempting me to mark her. I never rest. And the more I am at her side, the weaker my will to fight it. And it's only getting worse..."

Glancing at my friend, I admitted my fears, something I don't do very often. "I am afraid... I can see the broken pieces between us but I don't know how to fix it."

"Which is why you need to talk to her. Tell her how you feel. About James and Marcus--"

"Trust me when I say, human women don't appreciate territorial claims or overly possessive boyfriends."

Liam frowned, looking confused. "You are her mate not a boyfriend..."

I smiled indulgently at his naïve view of human social structure but didn't stop him as he carried on.

"...regardless, you need to set things right between the two of you, if you are to face what's to come."

My smile faded instantaneously. "What do you mean?"

Liam genuinely looked wary; his tone anxious when he responded. "Alpha has forbidden me to speak of it. I think they want to tell you themselves but all I can say is, it's happening next week and... and Alpha Nicholas is involved."

For the third time, the air left my lungs as the feeling of being punched in the gut descended into my consciousness. My senses tuned out as the image of my Father took centre stage, my whole body freezing at the mere thought of him.

"Tommy, are you listening? Go in there and talk to your mate..."

Dazed and shaken to the very bone, I looked at my friend before glancing towards the cabin. I have to protect her.

"I need to go see my brothers"