

# Mated To Five Alpha Brothers

## Chapter 44

Given that the last time I had seen the pack infirmary, I had been hyperventilating about my imminent death, the place did not fail to deliver on the chills as I walked through its corridors for the second time. But unlike the first encounter, where the place had been quite and rather dead, it was now abuzz with activity. People...shifters, were flitting in and out of rooms, carrying trays or scribbling away in their pads. The only time they stopped was to either covertly glance in my direction or completely freeze in their tracks with the classic "deer caught in the headlights" look.

I couldn't blame them for their blatant staring considering that the last time they had seen me was at the pack announcement months ago where Alex had reluctantly revealed that their youngest brother and Beta, had found a human mate. Me - the tragic, pathetic disappointment.

That had been the first and the last time that I was given a welcome of any sort since Alex never missed an opportunity to remind me just how unwelcome I really was.

As for me, I found myself in the same boat when it came to deciding on an appropriate reaction towards them. For someone who had been cooped up for months on end with no company nor any form of stimulation, the loud noise, the overpowering scents, and the intimidating wolves proved to be sensory overload. I felt nervous and fidgety as I walked alongside Liam, who on the other hand, seemed rather preoccupied as he greeted everyone along the way.

The urge to reach out and hold his hand to help soothe my nerves was overwhelming but I refrained, knowing that such an act, even one done for the purpose of harmless comfort would be frowned upon in this world. Physical touch was something reserved for mates or lovers. The shifter culture did not incorporate nor encourage random or even friendly touch between adults considering how territorial their wolves can be which was a blow because after the treacherous events of the last few days, I was desperate for any form of comfort.

"In here"

Turning into the small room that Liam had pointed, I peered in. It had a single bed and a desk in the corner with a sink and a few cupboards along the opposite wall. The elderly woman seated at the desk stood up as we entered and offered me a smile and a respectful nod in Liam's direction.

Another round of chills wracked through my system as I derecognized a woman, even though I couldn't recall her name. She had been the same woman who had interacted with me on that fateful day when I had been brought to the infirmary for the first time.

"Hello Mia. It's lovely to see you again."

I stared, maybe a little impolitely but I couldn't help myself. Aside from the obvious fact that I didn't share in the sentiment, the last few days had pretty much shut me down. Thomas's absence, the incident with Marcus, which made me physically ill every time it came to mind, and the crushing news about the announcement next week...

My throat constricted at the very thought and my heart pounded within my chest as the bond twisted violently. Why did it feel like a betrayal? And why did it hurt so much?

Liam's eyes volleyed between the woman and me expectantly, but I continued to stare, blank and uncaring. I was past the point of worrying over frivolous pleasantries when deep inside I felt like I had nothing left to live for.

The silence grew as both of them shifted uncomfortably. Liam, guessing that I wasn't going to respond, cleared his throat awkwardly, his concerned gaze settling on my face as he spoke. "I'll leave you with Jo here and come back to get you when you're done."

I wanted to say something but no words came out. What could be said when everything was chosen, decided, and forced upon you? Nothing. Holding my silence, I nodded at him before moving to the seat that Jo had drawn out, ignoring the piercing gaze on my back as he lingered around for a few minutes before taking his leave.

The sound of the door closing had me looking in that direction, hoping that he would come back and take me away from there. From this place, this pack, and from Thomas...

"So, tell me Mia, how are you?"

I turned to stare at the friendly woman, remembering she had been nice to me the last time. But yet, I couldn't bring myself to engage. The last bit of energy that I possessed was the only thing holding me together and I wasn't about to waste it on pointless conversations.

Her smile faltered before she hurriedly masked it. "Gamma Liam mentioned that you have been unwell lately which is why you're here today. Is there anything in particular that I can help with?"

She looked to me to take over, to give her some indication that I was going to reciprocate but I sat still. The only help I needed was to get out of here, a request I knew for a fact, wouldn't go down well.

Offering a tight-lipped smile when I didn't respond she turned towards the computer and typed away. "Alright. We'll just start with the basics then."

For the next few minutes, Jo worked in silence as she proceeded to check my blood pressure, and eight and take some blood, all the while entering notes and murmuring to herself. I let her do her job, my mind unconcerned for anything other than Liam's words which repeated over and over in my head. "Alpha Alex and Marcus will be taking mates next week... I'm so sorry Mia..."

"Well, other than the fact that you've lost some substantial weight, everything else seems fine. We'll wait for your blood works before we can get into details but are you eating well Mia?"

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With my mind wrecked and my heart heavy, all I could manage was a glance in her direction before I turned towards the door once again. What would it be like to just get up and walk out the door? To leave this place?

Such thoughts had haunted me over the months given the continued isolation, the recurrent dreams, and the decline of my mental state but I had written them all off, concerned that my actions would jeopardize the safety of my friends and Thomas, should I succeed and concern for my own life, should I fail.

But now, it was all I could idea that I would have to suffer in silence while the brothers took mates of their own, have kids, and lead a fulfilling life while Thomas and Ideterioratede under their cruelty, ruled out any possibility of living here anymore.

The only way I was going to survive was to leave and whether that idea was borne out of desperation or insanity, it had ignited a spark in my heart. A flicker, a small shot at hope, that I may not have to live like this forever. I had a choice despite the odds that were stacked against me.

"Mia?"

But where would I go? Manhattan? No...That would be the first place they'll look...Florida? No. Not there. Never there ...."Mia? What's going on? You seem very distracted."

With my heart beating wildly in my chest, I finally looked away from the door. There was no point in waiting for rescue or hoping for things to get better. I would have to rely on myself I had to get myself out of this nightmare.

But...what about Thomas? My heart stalled at the thought.

Thomas would never agree to leave the pack. And I understood why but I also knew that I couldn't stay here anymore. I would find a way once I got out. Somehow... but I need to get out first. One thing at a time...

"May I be upfront with you?"

My mind snapped out of its vortex of deliberation at Jo's sudden change of tone. I looked up to find her frustrated but clearly anxious.

Perhaps realizing that she had a, t last caught my attention, she schooled her expression and gentled her tone. "I'm not going to sit here and say I understand everything that's going on in your life or in between you and Beta Thomas. And I certainly cannot tell you what it feels like to be a human or perceive life through a human experience..."

Taking a deep breath, she spared a glance at the door. "... but I can tell you that these things that you are experiencing...Your moods, weight loss... it's all connected. The bond can become a painful and destructive force when it's ignored. Which is why fated mates do not prolong the marking..."

She smiled sympathetically. "... But I get that humans prefer to take things slow and there's nothing wrong with that but you are no longer part of that world or bound by its customs..."

My heart pounded at her words. Of course, she didn't understand what was going on but I knew for certain that she had it all wrong. The world out there was where I belonged. Not this cage that I was condemned to gradually wither away in.

And as much as I appreciated her concern, I did not want this conversation to progress any further. There was just too much pain and heartbreak going on.

Struggling to string the words, I stopped her before she could continue. "Thank you, but I am fine... I would like to go back now."

Her lips thinned and her eyes lost that friendly spark as she studied me quietly for a while before she nodded. Turning away, Jo stood up to leave with a final glance in my direction. "I will let Gamma Liam know that you are waiting here. Please don't leave the room until he arrives."

Striding towards the door h, however, she paused just before exiting. "Forgive me if I crossed a line. I was only trying to help."

And with those words, the door closed a second time. The twinge of guilt that I expected to feel never came. The old me would have patiently listened and politely answered no matter how hurtful or uncomfortable it was but now, I was dead on the inside. The brothers had made sure of that.

The silence that greeted me soon after was comforting, like a blanket on a cold night but my mind reeled with the thoughts from before.

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Could I get out? Would I make it?

As I looked around, I realized that it was the first time I had been truly left alone unlike the cabin where guards patrolled the area 24\*7. Walking out of here without raising any suspicion wouldn't be difficult as the shifters had seen me walk in here with their Gamma. Or at least, that was the theory.

Suddenly, the theory seemed good enough. I realized that opportunities such as this weren't going to happen often and I had nothing holding me back. So, waiting for the right moment to plan and prepare was a moot point.

With that in mind, I rose in a daze, my mind debating back and forth at the sanity of this decision but I paid it no mind. Oddly, the bond remained silent as I walked out the door, glancing in every direction, looking for someone to jump out and catch me in the act but no one did. In fact, not a single shifter paid any attention as I turned and walked down the corridor toward the front of the building.

Everything was a blur as the adrenalin surged through my veins. It was the most alive I had felt in a long time. Worry collided with excitement as I acted on pure instinct, picking a path to walk quickly without drawing any attention. I had no idea if it would lead me away from the territory, but I took the direction that made logical sense. Instead of heading in the direction we came, I walked around the building to the back and made for the trees.

Blood rushed to my limbs, making my strides faster as the building grew smaller behind me and the trees came into view. There was an exhilarating feeling that I couldn't deny. What had felt impossible was within my grasp as I slipped into the trees and broke into a run.

Crisscrossingbetween between the shrubs and the undergrowth, I raced in the direction that I hoped would lead me to a main road.

My thoughts were clear, and my mind and body working in sync for the first time. The bond stayed silent for which I was grateful. Perhaps, it knew it was fighting a lost cause. Were bonds sentient?

I brushed it off my mind. I had never bothered to ask before and I wasn't about to start wondering now.

My breaths came in pants, a stitch quickly forming in my side that threatened to slow me down but I pushed on. There was nothing that was going to stop me now.

Except...

I skidded to a halt, my heart thundering in my chest when my eyes landed on a brown wolf blocking the path directly ahead.

No...This can't be happening.

We stared at each other for a few seconds before the wolf morphed into a man, a transition that both fascinated and sickened me at the same time. I had only seen Thomas do it a handful of times and I didn't think I would ever get used to hearing the bones crack and not flinch.

I watched as the fur receded and skin began to show. Toned muscles took the place of bulky animal flesh until the final transformation was complete.

My heart lurched in horror as I recognized the shifter in front of me.

Aidan.

A sinister smile played across his face as he took me in, disheveled sweaty, and breathless.

"Where do you think you're going princess?"

My mind, which had been endlessly whirling with thoughts fell eerily silent as my gut twisted, the sickening memory of his fingers probing my insides flashing for a brief moment, incapacitating me both verbally and physically.

I froze as the adrenaline began to fade replaced with a sinking feeling of terror and despair.

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He cocked his head to the side as he made his way closer, naked and self-assured.

"You know, you're a hard person to get to. Especially since fucking Oliver made sure that I wasn't assigned anywhere close to you but by Goddess am I glad to see you now..."

A shiver ran down my spine as I inwardly cursed my foolhardy plan. Swept in the moment of reckless delirium, I had forgotten about the patrol guards.

Stopping at arm's length, Aidan inhaled deeply, his eyes closing in an act of pleasure while his hand dropped down to grab his hardening dick. "You still smell so.... delicious..."

I nearly retched at the sight, taking a few steps back to put some space between us.

The movement snapped that myne predatory eyes open as he growled in warning. "Now now, you're not thinking of running from me are you princess? You do know that I'm the best shifter in the pack... and believe me..."

He began to pump his cock, his eyes flashing gold before swirling black. "... I will hunt you down..."

I swallowed hard, holding myself still until the black receded, the neutral brown took its place. I may not have learned everything about shifters, but I knew enough to know when their eyes turned black, it meant that you were treading on thin ice and it wasn't going to take much for the wolf to appear.

Pleased with my compliance, his smile returned. "Now... be a good girl and tell me what you're doing here."

Stuttering under sheer fear, I managed to croak out. "Just exploring"

"Really? So why were you running?"

My eyes darted around my surroundings. There was no escape. Not with a shifter who could catch me in seconds and probably crush me by flexing his fingers.

"I-I thought I heard something."

He seemed to consider my words, his smile stretching impossibly wider. "You do know that wolves can tell when you're lying. Surely your mate must have mentioned that."

When I didn't reply, he hummed in response. "Or maybe, he's not your mate at all. Who knows... Everything about you is such a mystery."

He began to mutter, s if musing out loud. "No one knows where you are, why you are kept away, why you aren't marked but most of all why they haven't killed you yet... But I think there's something far bigger at play..."

Pumping his cock a few more times, he smirked. "...and one day, I intend to find out..."

My eyes dropped to his cock, my ststepfather'sace flashing through my mind as he stood over my bed and did the same. Not there, not there, not there...

A howl ripped the air, startling me out of my memories. I gasped as Aidan's jaw protruded into a muzzle before he threw his head back and howled in return.

Turning in my direction while his jaw realigned, he growled frustrated. "Come princess, start walking the way you came. The Gamma is looking for you. And don't even think of running..."

Leaning closer as his musk filled my nostrils he whispered, his voice holding a threat and a promise. "...remember I'll be there watching."

My feet moved as I turned and hurried away from him, my steps only faltering when he shouted in the wind. "Until next time princess..."