

Chapter 45

Daisy

Panic seizes my lungs, and I jump up from the bed to pace the room like a mad person. Xavier tilts his head. “Are you okay, Daisy?”

“Okay?!” I snap, not sure whether to cry or laugh. “My family has poisoned me for years. My mate rejected me, and now it turns out I’m also adopted? I’m having a f*cking mental breakdown, Xavier!”

He frowns. “Anything I can do to help?”

“Yes, stop looking so disgustingly beautiful! Right now, I should want to slap you, not kiss you!”

His lips twitch, and he takes a seat on the edge of the bed, running his fingers through his hair. “I’m not against the idea of kissing. Do you want to sit in my lap?”

“No!”

“You’re really that upset?”

“Of course I am!”

He sighs heavily. "Okay, that was a stupid question..." He strokes his chin before his face lights up with an idea. "I know - something that might cheer you up."

I glare at him, watching as he reaches for his phone. He flicks on the screen, and suddenly, I hear the horrifying sound of my six-year-old self singing Britney Spear's "...Baby One More Time at the top of my lungs. "You were really cute as a kid," he says. "I'm glad Isabella uploaded this video."

With a high-pitched scream, I launch myself at the Alpha and at the phone in his hand. But Xavier easily holds it up out of my reach while his other arm wraps around my waist and pins me against him. It's not until I'm sitting in his lap that I realize I basically threw my body over him in my attempt to get the phone.

"Give me the phone," I wail, still trying to fight him.

"I think not." His strength is seriously scary. The b*stard holds me prisoner with one arm. "We will watch it together and laugh together."

Since he isn't letting me go and won't give me my phone, I can only groan and slump against him. His chest smells like pine and rain, which makes me blush. "Fine..." I mutter into the wall of his chest. "Put the d*mn video on and torture me. I don't care..."

Xavier kisses the top of my head before hitting replay. And there I am, six years old and thinking I'm a freaking future star, singing so loudly I'm surprised my family isn't deaf. Even my dance is embarrassing. My face burns, and I let out a pitiful sound. -But Xavier, the fucking bastard, is entertained. "Any chance you could teach me that move?"

"F*ck you."

He chuckles. "Again?" Unable to put up with his teasing, I burrow my face into the crook of his neck. He catches his breath, but neither of us moves. I am just as unwilling to make a move as he is. Because despite my humiliation, I'm in love with this guy. I can pretend that I hate him all I want, but when his scent hits my nose for the second time, it's almost soothing enough to make me forget about the stupid video. Almost. Laughter rumbles in his chest.

"That dance is seriously adorable. Look at you go, my tiny little Omega, smiling so widely at the camera!" I groan.

"Will you shut the f*ck up?"

He ignores me. "So many people have liked it, too-two hundred thousand likes and counting."

"Noooo!" I press my face closer to his neck. "Can you just turn it off already?"

“Oh, come on,” he chuckles. “This video is a masterpiece. People love it. You’re adorable.”

With a sigh, I lift my head to look at my young, little naive self. Despite my utter humiliation, a smile threatens to break out on my face. “My dad was still alive when that video was taken,” Suddenly, sadness overwhelms me. “But I guess he isn’t really my dad... not anymore.”

Xavier strokes my back. “Don’t be silly. He is still your dad, even if you’re not related by blood.” Tears prickle against my eyelids.

“Why didn’t he tell me the truth? He was on his deathbed, and he still couldn’t confess,” I sob into Xavier’s shoulder. His grip tightens around me.

“Sometimes, people think they are protecting us by keeping secrets,” he says quietly, and I know he is speaking from experience. “Maybe he thought it was the best thing for you.”

“But it wasn’t,” I argue, tears streaming down my face. “It wasn’t fair to me-or to him.” My voice cracks with emotion. “If I had known, I could have....I don’t know...moved away from the family that treated me like shit.”

“And missed out on the opportunity of meeting me?” His voice is playful, but I can sense the undercurrent of seriousness beneath it. I pause for a moment to consider his words, wiping my eyes on his skin.

“That’s not funny,” I mumble into his skin, but a small smile tug at the corner of my mouth despite myself. He chuckles.

“You little shit. Did you just use me as your personal tissue?”

“Seems like it.” I sniff, pulling away to gaze into his eyes. They glow with the familiar warmth that makes my insides twist into knots.

“Hey,” He murmurs tenderly, cupping my chin. “It’s okay to be hurt, Daisy. We might be werewolves, but we are also human.”

His words hit home, and I let out a sigh, resting my head back against his chest. For all his teasing and tormenting, Xavier has a soothing effect on me. “Promise you won’t laugh if I cry?” I ask quietly.

“I promise.” he replies, his hand rubbing comforting circles on my back. And so, I let it all out. I cry like a baby, sobbing into Xavier’s chest as he holds me tight. His heart beats steadily beneath my ear, the rhythm calming my frantic mind. He continues to stroke my hair, whispering soothing words into my ear. I hate how badly I need it.

“This doesn’t make us a couple,” I mutter. He breathes a laugh.

“I know.” “But I might fuck you again...” I can feel his lips curl into a smile when he kisses the top of my head.

“Already looking forward to it.” Even though I shouldn’t, I lean against him to show him that I want him to continue planting kisses on my head. The soft touch of his lips is more comforting than words can describe. He is my rock and anchor and so damn gentle it’s impossible to hate him. The bastard is treating me like I’m precious and it’s then that I realize that despite his earlier rejection, Xavier really does care about me. So why did he reject me in the first place?