

## Chapter 0341

As Professor Chance wraps up the lesson he tells us that he will run our final next week so we can spend the rest of our class time outside doing things that are practical. Once he dismisses us the general rumble of books and supplies being packed fills the room and the general noise of voices increases in volume as the students leave the lecture hall.

I take my time and so does Tyler. "Can I walk with you?" He asks shyly.

"Sure." I say on a breath out. I take another breath in to calm my temper and let it out slowly as I stand up with my bag and turn to face him. "What you said is not something that is easy to forgive. It was purposely hurtful. You don't deserve to find out anything about me after your accusations. But, I am going to try. You are not the only person who has suffered through life. Don't ever assume you've had it the worst. There is always somebody suffering more than you. Some of us are just better at moving forward with life. I don't let my past hold me back. It definitely motivates me and my actions, but I would never consider taking it out on someone else."

He just nods and starts to shuffle out of the top row, checking every few steps that I am following him. We make it outside and his friends are nowhere to be seen, he's all mine for the time being.

"Mina, I have Tyler with me, take your time. I'm going to see what he has to say."

"Got it."

We walk towards the center of campus again not really aiming for anywhere in particular that I can tell.

"So your mom really died?" He asks the ground in front of him.

"Yep." We just keep walking.

"Is Mina really your sister?"

"Not by blood, but sometimes life brings you people that are closer than that. She and Nickolas are those people for me. It's easier to say we are sisters, cause that's what she feels like and it's what people understand without a lot of explanation. I don't like my story or retelling it. I don't like the victim pity in people's eyes when they hear it. Mina and Nickolas have never looked at me like that. We get along a majority of the time. We have similar interests and goals in life and she has been there for me. This was an opportunity to start new and I took it. Just like you."

He nods his head again. "There's always a cost though."

"Every decision has a cost. It's just a matter of if you are willing to pay the price."

"How are you so young and yet can talk like that?"

"I've had to suck it up more than a few times. I had to decide to stay stuck and let other people control my life or move forward, learn from what happened and be an example for others in a similar situation. I decided that if I can help even one person to not go through what I have then the pain and suffering and irritation was worth it. I will not let anyone control me or my life again."

He looks at me sharply. "But you will let the Moon Goddess choose your mate for you? You would give up that control?"

"I never said that. I just said I'm willing to wait for my mate. There is a reason we can't find them until we are 18. It gives us a chance to live a little. How we choose to 'live' is up to us. It is possible that our mate isn't chosen until we are a bit older or that our mate changes based on our life experience. No one knows how the Moon Goddess works. But I do want to know who she chose for me and then I will decide, because what everyone forgets is that we have the choice to reject our mate. So it is still a choice."

"What about family obligations or social status and things like that?"

"What do you mean?"

"A lot of packs are choosing mates for their future Alphas and Betas based on blood line and other things like that. I even heard the next Alpha King has a chosen mate lined up for him."



I laughed out loud at that. "I'm sure there are Elders who would like those rumors to be true and spread them widely. I've seen Elders try, but what they forget is they are no longer in an actual position of power. They are advisors and only around to help guide and give opinions based on their experience and if the future Alphas and Betas are worth their title they will think through the decision and effectively make the best one without being coerced into a decision that benefits someone else while making them miserable. Leaders have to see through the bullsh\*t, part of that is mating matches and manipulation."



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