

Payment To the Alpha by Ms.M Chapter 21

It felt good getting that question off my chest.

I'm eighteen, I can't get married. Correction, I don't want to get married. Especially not to a man I barely know.

They all looked around at each other, nobody wanted to answer, I could tell.

Finally, after a few quiet minutes, James started speaking.

"Do you remember how your mother told you about the spell that was put on you before you were born?"

"I- How did you know she said that?"

He pointed to his ears.

"Werewolf, remember? As Lydia said, we have a much faster healing ability, along with immaculate hearing and sight."

Um yeah ... right. How was I supposed to take this? Some sort of adaption manual upon entering this place would have been nice.

I sat there quietly waiting for James to continue.

"So when your parents had the witch put the spell on you, they wanted to make sure that we couldn't back out. So at your mother's wishes, the witch made a binding soul contract along with a lock spell, signed in blood. If we don't get married by the time you turn 19..."

James' POV

I can't. I can't say it. I cannot tell Avery the consequences of not getting married.

She would do it just to save me. I know that. There is, however, another way. I would use the love she has for her family if I have to.

'Don't be a jackass'

I will do what I need to

'You don't need to be a jackass. She's our mate, human or not. And trust me you do not want to get on her bad side'

If I have to play the douche to make her believe she needs to do this and stay oblivious to the soul contract, then I will. I still haven't made up my mind regarding my feelings for her

'You like her'

Blade growled back.

Recently my wolf, Blade has been relentlessly badgering me about Avery. I mean I understand, she's our mate, but she doesn't have a wolf, how can he be so smitten?

I pushed him in the back of my head and focused back on the conversation at hand.

"What will happen?"

Avery looked up at me with those big brown eyes. Batting through her lashes. Her bottom lip trembling from the crying.

Damn you, bloody dog... I like her. I don't want to hurt her. But drastic times call for drastic measures.

"I don't know what will happen. But we must get married, it was part of the contract and breaking a contract with a witch always ends badly." I spoke softly and took her hand in mine.

"Who was the witch?"

Her question made me stiffen, along with everyone else present. I saw the fear in Natasha's eyes in my peripheral vision.

Why did she care if Avery knew or not?

I threw her a quick glance and Natasha shook her head hoping I wouldn't tell.

"We don't know. I was just a child when it all happened and my parents never told me."

'Lies'

Do I have to block you out?

Thank you.

—

The silence in my head was welcomed.

Avery's head shot to Natasha and I saw the blood drain from her face.

"You're a witch. Can't you find out who it was?"

Natasha looked at me pleadingly. But I leaned back and crossed my arms over my chest. Karma's a bitch.

"I'm sorry, Avery, not all witches know each other... I could look around if you'd like but I'm telling you, chances of finding the witch are low."

"Please, just see what you can do. If we find the witch responsible perhaps they can help us stop the marriage."

Ouch.

I didn't think they would but those words hurt. I never put much thought into the whole marriage, to me, it was obvious after my parents explained. They also told me when I was a child that she was a very special girl and that once I had her in my grasp, I would never want to let go. As if they knew we would-be mates.

Alpha Dominic's words repeated themselves in my mind.

'Tell her the truth. It's the only way.'

I did. Sort of. I left out a tiny detail regarding a tiny contract that may or may not result in our deaths. However, the majority of this conversation had been all truthful.

"Avery, we will get married. That's it." Sorry, little girl.

" But if-"

"NO. You and I will get married. End of discussion. There is no other way," I was losing my temper. It wasn't Avery's fault. It was everything else going on, but she was about to be the recipient of my rage.

" WHY? If we can find another way around this then we don't have to get married!"

We were both standing at this point. Me towering over her and her hands flying everywhere while she speaks. She was mad too.

"BECAUSE THERE IS NO WAY AROUND THIS. YOU WILL MARRY ME, THAT'S IT!"

What the fuck is happening?

Avery's eyes lowered and she cowered back... I had used my alpha tone, not thinking it would work but it is the one I use in serious matters. Why is it working on her?

Avery sat back down on the couch and kept her eyes at her feet.

"Avery... fuck"

"I'm sorry. There just isn't anything we can do. Not right now at least."

Everyone else had pushed themselves as far back into the couches as possible and their eyes touched the floors as well, except for Natasha's, she wasn't a wolf so she wasn't affected like the others were, she only felt the power in my voice.

But Avery, now that is a mystery.

"Please look at me."

"WHAT THE FUCK?!" Alex exclaimed in a not-so-subtle tone. Dumbass.

Everyone's eyes widened and Lydia's and Amber's hands flew to their mouths.

When Avery looked up at me. Her nose was bleeding and her eyes were white again. Completely, eggshell, no iris, white.

"What's happening?"

I asked no one in particular.

Slowly but surely, Avery's eyes turned back to their normal, honey brown color.

She looked at me and in her eyes were so many emotions swimming around. Anger, sadness, confusion, and shame. She squinted her eyes and shook her head in disbelief.

"I wasn't affected by your command. I didn't want to back down. But a voice in my head yelled at me." She looked terrified,

"What did the voice say, sweetheart?" Natasha asked her in a soft manner.

"He yelled for me to submit. I couldn't fight it."

She cast her eyes down again, looking ashamed.

I looked back at Natasha hoping she would have an answer. However, I was met with her eyes nearly bulging out of her head and she was lost for words.

Really? You always have a snide, bitchy thing to say but NOW you choose to lose your voice? I thought to myself.

Amber grabbed a napkin from the table and handed it to Avery so that she could wipe her nose.

Who was that voice? How can someone inside her mind command her to do things? As if she is not in control of her own body or mind. She doesn't have a wolf. Her eyes had turned this way once before when we were speaking earlier but Avery didn't say much about it.

We need to figure out what is going on, or this could turn disastrous.

"Wait a minute-" Avery's angelic voice broke me from my thoughts and all my attention went back to her.

"My parents were werewolves. Does that mean I am one too? The spell that was put on me, you never told me about why it was cast."

Oh, fuck me.

"When your mother was abducted, she was...raped, by her captor. Your biological father. The witch who put the spell on you, did so to strip you of your powers. Of your wolf. You're not a wolf Avery. I'm sorry but they took that away from you."

With the last words came spits of venom. I was seething. The thought of punishing an innocent child for something that was not in her control. And the witch responsible was sitting in this room.

Had she had her wolf she would have been stronger, she would have been able to protect herself. She would have known I was her mate.

I looked over at Natasha who was squirming in her seat under my gaze. Good.

I remember my uncle Carlos telling me about why he asked Natasha.

He said my parents wanted a witch that could be trusted. But what difference would that have made?

The result would be the same. Avery would be without her identity either way.

"Who is my dad?" Her smooth voice broke my thoughts once again. Probably for the better. I was feeling this eagerness to rip of Natasha's head off.

I shook my head and took her hand

"I don't know. No one does really. Except for your mother." I answered her truthfully.

Who her biological father was, was unknown to all of us.

"She said it was because of revenge."

I saw the tears slipping from her eyes. I knew what she was thinking.

"Whatever reason that it happened, at least something pure came from it. I can only imagine how horrible it must have been for you mother, but you're here, and you're safe. You may have been made from vengeance, but that doesn't define you. You are your own person, and we will all help you figure out who that is."

She smiled up at me. She wrapped her hands around my neck and leaned in, hugging me, while placing her face in my neck.

"Thank you" It was merely a whisper. But I heard her loud and clear.

'Told you, you don't have to be a jackass'

Don't go telling me 'I told you so' yet. This fight isn't over.

After the meeting was done, the sun had set outside.

"Hey are you tired?" I wanted to take Avery on a little walk around the territory and talk to her about everything that had happened,

"Yeah a little bit, why?"

"I was thinking we could take a walk." She nodded her head and so I grabbed her hand. After bidding everyone goodbye I realized I needed to speak with Natasha without any extra ears.

"Hey why don't you go wait downstairs and I'll be right there."

"Sure."

Avery stepped out of the room alongside Lydia and Amber and I watched as she turned down the corridor.

As if knowing I needed to speak with her, Natasha stayed seated on the couch. I closed the door and locked it before walking over and pouring myself another drink.

Anytime I was speaking with this woman, I needed something strong to calm my nerves.

"This is bad James." My head snapped to Natasha who had a serious look going. She never batted an eyelash, but right now I could sense some fear radiating from her.

Payment To the Alpha by Ms.M Chapter 22

Avery's POV

* * * * *

I was standing in the foyer talking to Amber about the events that had occurred.

Someone whistled catching my attention and I saw Chase, Alfred, Amanda and Sofia exiting the communal area and they were walking towards us.

"Hey guys!" Chase chimed as he swung his arms around me in a hug.

The hug left me speechless and I froze not sure what to do. Realizing I wasn't hugging him back, Chase took one of his hands and guided my arms around him.

"See, there you go. That's lesson 1.1 on how to hug." His comment had me laughing so hard my stomach started to hurt.

Seeing the grin on Chase's face only made me laugh harder. I jokingly slapped his arm and stuck my tongue out.

"What is going on here?!" A loud voice came booming from the staircase.

It was James and he didn't look all too happy seeing Chase's arms wrapped around me. Something Chase must have also noticed cause his hands disappeared faster than I could blink.

"Hey, Alpha." Sofia purred as she put a strand of her hair behind her ear. I just scoffed in response, earning a smirk from the Alpha. The Alpha. Huh, it has a nice ring to it.

I glared at him and crossed my arms over my chest.

"Alpha." Chase said with a head bow.

"Chase, don't you have practice to get to?"

"Uhm, we have a break Alpha, practice starts in twenty."

Chase rubbed his palms together, probably sweaty from this encounter. I kind of felt bad for him. Why was James acting so rude?

"Well I have seen you train, you could use those twenty minutes." His face was void of any emotions as he stared daggers at Chase.

"Yes Alpha." Poor fella sprinted out of the house like his life depended on it, but the rest of his friends stayed behind.

I snapped my gaze back to James and my arms flew to my sides as my mouth was left wide open.

"What?" James shrugged and met my gaze with an amused one.

"Why did you have to act like that? He hadn't done anything wrong James."

"He touched my girl. That's the wrong he did."

I felt a blush creep up to my cheeks. I bit my lip as I tried my best to hold my serious gaze locked with James.

I could see the frown on Sofia's face when she heard James call me 'his girl'.

Don't laugh Avery. Do not laugh.

"Hey Alpha, have you had dinner?" I saw Sofia's hand slide up his arm and rest on his shoulder while she batted her eyelashes at him.

I felt a pit in my stomach. What the hell is this I'm feeling? Jealousy? Holy shit, I'm jealous of that blonde, nasty ass bitch.

I waited for James to react before I blew my cap.

Any day now Alpha.

I waited but all he did was continue staring at me. I felt my smile turn into a frown and my hands balling up into fists at my sides.

"SINCE WHEN DO YOU TOUCH YOUR ALPHA!?"

Sofia's hand quickly jerked away from James' shoulder. It wasn't James who had spoken though, it was Alex. He walked towards us with his hands at his sides and his eyes were dark, he was pissed.

I guess he held some authority as well.

"I-" Sofia tried defending herself. Didn't go very well however.

"I was just asking if the Alpha had eaten." She quickly spurted out.

"I don't believe touching is a necessity when asking someone a question. Is it?" His voice was low and dark. His stance was hard with his hands balled up to fists by his sides and his chest was boosting.

James just stood there, never breaking eye contact with me.

"I'm sorry Beta." Sofia bowed her head in submission.

"Tomorrow morning you will be running twenty miles extra during practice."

"But-"

"Do you want to change it to a week?!"

"No, Beta."

"Then leave."

Sofia kept her eyes glued to the floor as she scurried out of the house, Amanda threw us a smile and followed after her.

I looked up at Alex who seemed to be relaxing. He let his shoulders drop and his eyes weren't black anymore, they had turned back to their grey-blue color.

I bit my lip trying to keep myself from laughing. Alex gave me a side glance and winked.

"So... uhm, you guys wanna grab something to eat?" I hadn't realized that Alfred was still here.

He looked at me and scratched the back of his head.

A loud growl was heard and echoed through the house. All our heads turned to James. His eyes looking murderous and his jaw clenched.

And just like that the fourth little piggy escaped the wolf and ran away.

"ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!" What the hell is his problem? His okay with that blonde bimbo hanging on him and doesn't speak a word when she's flirting but when someone shows a friendly interest in me he gets possessive?!

Fuck you James.

"What's wrong little one?" His face held too much amusement for my taste. I was raging.

"What do you mean what's wrong? That blonde bimbo was practically drooling all over you and your brother had to speak in order for her to let go, you said nothing! And when Alfred asks us ALL if we want to eat you act like this?"

"If Sofia touching me bothered you, why didn't you just say something?" My cheeks instantly flared up again.

I looked at Alex who looked just as amused by this conversation as his brother.

"I- it didn't." I couldn't admit that I was jealous. I barely knew him. But something in me wanted to kill Sofia for touching him. I so badly wanted everyone to know that he was mine.

But why?

'Mate'

And there is that voice again. I really think I'm going mad.

Wait a minute. Mate. Natasha told me about those. But does that mean...But I don't have a wolf. It's not possible is it?

"Holy shit"

It was meant to be said in my head. But the words came out aloud. If they were normal human beings they wouldn't have heard it. It was barely a whisper as I let all the air out that I was holding in.

However them being werewolves and all, I'm pretty sure they heard.

James looked at me with a searching gaze. His arms fell to his sides.

"What? What happened?" He looked so, I don't know, hopeful? This is all too much right now. I can't do this. Not when I'm not certain. The way Natasha described mates it seemed like they were sacred and I couldn't fool around with the word.

I needed to keep this closed down for now.

"Nothing. I think I just need some food." His eyes fell and the hopefulness fell with it.

Don't worry James. I'll figure out what's going on and then I'll let you know.

"Let's go eat then." James reached out his hand for me to grab, I looked into his eyes and whatever emotions he had in them before had vanished.

I grabbed his hand and we all started walking to the dining hall.

The marble floors made clicking sounds as we stepped in.

There weren't a lot of people. I assumed that they had all eaten already.

We removed the lids off of the heating containers and started piling on the food.

There were mashed potatoes, steak, sausage, gravy and a whole salad buffet.

To my left, Alex was piling food on his plate. I gently nudged him with my elbow to get his attention.

"Thank you. For what you did."

"Any time sis." He gave me another wink. Sis? That's cute. Kind of awkward, but cute nonetheless.

As we walked to the table I noticed how only James, his siblings and some other people who also had a superior personality to them were sitting there. I'm guessing this table wasn't for just anybody.

James was sitting at the head of the table. He pulled out a chair next to him for me to sit on.

"So Avery, you haven't been properly introduced to the other ranked members." Alex began

"Ranked?" I asked sounding just as befuddled as I was while scratching the bridge of my nose...

"Yes, ranked members are those who hold superiority to the other pack members. For example I'm the Beta. My job is to assist the alpha in all aspects regarding pack business. If the alpha would have to go away somewhere I will go with him. In any situation that I can't, it is my job to make sure that the pack is being taken care of in his absence." He stopped and looked at me as if to say "You with me?"

I nodded indicating I was understating what he was saying, mostly anyways.

"This here is Jackson, he is the gamma and his mate Lisa."

"Nice to meet you," I smiled at them, and they smiled right back. I like them better when they smile. It somewhat takes away the fear that they might eat me.

"This is Jackson's sister Trisha and her mate Alvin."

"Like the chipmunks!" I said with a big smile before realizing exactly what I had said. My hand slammed to my mouth as quickly as the words came out.

Why could I never think before I speak? I melted in to the seat hoping to disappear.

"Hahaha exactly, I do actually sing but I have been prohibited from doing so in the pack house out of fear that the windows will shatter." Alvin said and glared mockingly at James who was sitting with a smirk.

He took it as a joke. Thank god.

I removed my hands and released a breath I didn't know I was holding.

"I'm sorry for that." Damn the shame I felt right now.

"Don't be sweetheart. It's not the first time and surely not the last. Don't even think about it."

The gamma if I remember it correctly, Trisha, answered.

I chuckled and a sense of relief washed over me. This was actually really nice.

We all continued talking for about an hour. I learned how Trisha met Alvin and that he was actually a part of James' uncle Carlos' pack before. They met while James was having a meeting at their pack and all ranked members were to attend.

James also told me about Damon who was in the room with us earlier. He is their cousin, and whenever everyone else has to leave, which is rare, Damon is in charge.

When we had all eaten, Elisabeth the girl that I had met earlier, along with another omega named David came and gathered everyone's plates.

We were walking out of the dining hall when a big hand grabbed my arm and spins me around. I fly straight into a hard, muscular chest and knew exactly whose chest it was.

Payment To the Alpha by Ms.M Chapter 23

I don't know how but whenever James is near I know it. Maybe also because if another guy had done this there would be hell to pay.

"Are you tired?" He looked at me with such tenderness as he took a strand of my hair and placed it behind my ear. His baby blue eyes were sparkling, I could stare into them for an eternity, get lost in them. For some reason whenever I looked into James' eyes, I felt safe. I felt as if every problem I had vanished. I wanted to hold on to that for a little longer tonight.

"Actually," I wiggled out of his grip and turned my heel heading for the door. I picked up my jacket that I had laid on the table for earlier when we were supposed to go for a walk.

I put it on and took all my hair and placed it on one side as I buttoned my jacket. It was November and the air out here was quite chilly.

"I believe you owe me a walk." I stretched out my hand for him to grab.

Like a child on Christmas his entire face lit up, and I think this was the first time I had actually seen him smile. His smile reached all the way up to his eyes and his perfect white teeth were on full display.

He grabbed a hoodie that was hanging on a chair and zipped it up before grabbing my hand and leading me out.

Outside the sun had set so the only light was from the lanterns and the moon.

It was perfect. The November cold air was dancing in front of us as we walked through the garden and down a gravel path. The path was lit up with solar panel lamps built into the ground.

We were walking in silence at the beginning. In a comfortable, cozy silence.

As we turned on the path James started pointing to different directions and told me where everything was. He said he will take me on a real tour tomorrow when the sun is up.

We continued walking on the gravel path for another fifteen minutes before I saw something light up at the end of the path.

I looked up at James only to see that he was already looking at me, smiling.

As we reached the end we walked over a small bridge that led to a beautiful gazebo. It was white and big and had twinkle lights set up all around the staircase and in the roof. Behind the gazebo was a beautiful lake.

The moonlight hitting the water made it look as if the light was surfing the waves.

James took my hand and led me to a bench overlooking the lake.

We sat down and just enjoyed the spectacular view. He never let go of my hand. Not once.

The sky was black and lit up with hundreds of stars. I had never seen a starlit sky like this before. The entire scenery was mesmerizing.

As I kept my gaze on the wonders in front of me, a thought popped up in my head. Every time I sat in nature, I had time to think clearly. And all my problems seemed not so bad.

"What's wrong with me, James?" I kept my eyes on the lake. Taking a deep breath as I asked my question.

I tore my eyes away from the beauty of the lake and focused them on the beauty of the man sitting beside me. Somehow this view made me even calmer than the one of the lake.

James was looking at me. Not just looking, but it felt as though he saw my soul.

"There is absolutely nothing wrong with you." He replied as his hand tightened around mine.

"Then why is this happening?" The air clouds leaving my mouth as I spoke evaporated quickly.

James sighed heavily before looking back at the lake.

"There is nothing wrong with you Avery. But there is something we need to talk about. I spoke to Natasha after everyone had left earlier..."

FLASHBACK

"It's bad James."

"You know something." It wasn't a question but a statement. Natasha knew something about the unusual things happening to Avery.

"When I was a child, I had a friend name Peta. He and I were as close as two people can be. We planned our wedding and the names of our future children. You know how it can be.

One day, when I had turned eighteen years old, Peta and I were planning on meeting up at the clearing in the woods were I lived. He was a werewolf and just as we presumed, we were mates.

I waited for him for twenty minutes before I started to worry and just as I was about to call him, he showed up. He emerged from the woods in his usual messy hair and torn jeans and a dark blue t-shirt. I had bought it for him the week before.

I ran up to him and hugged him, telling him how happy I was to see him and how he had me worried. But I pulled back when I realized that he wasn't hugging me back.

I looked him in the eyes and nothing seemed out of the ordinary. When I touched him I felt the same sparks as usual. It was him, my mate, my love. But to him I wasn't. He looked at me with a void. As if he didn't know who I was.

'You killed her.' He said. I didn't know what he was talking about, my mind was going crazy and I was only eighteen so I wasn't that much in control of my powers. I felt like breaking, like every fiber of my body was being ripped apart.

'You killed her.' He said again but that time he took a step closer. He was seething through his teeth. And then the next words that came out of his mouth, broke me completely.

'YOU KILLED MY MATE!'

Natasha was reliving memories I don't think she has thought about in a long time. Her eyes held terror and pain as if she felt it all over again. Which she probably was. The pain of being hurt by your mate never leaves you.

"Natasha we don't have to—"

"No. You need to know. Because what happened then is happening again." I felt a chill run through my body at her words. She had my full attention.

"I told him that I was his mate. That I wasn't dead. That I was standing right in front of him. That only made him madder. 'You filthy whore! You killed my mate. I saw you. She was just standing there and you drove a knife through her heart. You killed her and for that you will die.' He pulled up a knife from the hem of his pants and raised his hand, preparing to lunge it at me. I just stood there. I couldn't grasp what it was that was happening.

I was going to let him kill me, because death would be less painful than what I endured while listening to him.

Then I saw it, deep in his eyes I saw him fight. I saw him at war with himself. His hand was shaking in the air as if he was trying to restrain himself. And then from the shadows behind us a figure showed up. 'That's enough.' He said and I immediately knew who it was.

'Down boy.' Peta lowered his hand. He wasn't the one in control. He was a shell, controlled by someone else. 'Isn't that sweet. His love for you was almost enough to resist the need to kill you. He's strong but you're not.'

I asked him why he was doing this and his only answer was 'Love makes you weak. Love allows you to have control. I can't have you be in control just yet darling.'

With those words he looked back at Peta and I knew, I knew he was inside his brain. Peta raised his hand once more and looked me in the eyes. I closed my eyes preparing for what was to come. But they snapped open when I heard someone choking. I watched as Peta dug the knife further into his heart. I screamed for him to stop as I ran up to him.

I cupped his face with my hands. 'Please, please no, I love you, please don't leave me. You promised me that you would never leave me' I begged him. I pleaded and begged but I could see the life leaving his eyes.... ' I'm so sorry. Rem-ember -pro-m-ise. I love you.'

His last words. In his last moment alive he had been given back control. His last words were all I had left of him."

Natasha looked broken sitting in front of me. She looked empty and drained. Her eyes were bloodshot red and the tears had dried on her cheeks. A singular tear leaving as eyes are glued to the wall. But she's not seeing the wall. She's seeing her mate die in front her at eighteen years old.

But I have to know.

"Natasha, Who was the witch that was in control of his mind?"

Natasha's eyes wackily found mine. And now there was only one emotion taking over. Anger. She was raging inside and it looked as if she was about to burst.

"My father."

END OF FLASHBACK
