

## Payment To the Alpha by Ms.M Chapter 24

Avery's POV

\* \* \* \* \*

I couldn't breathe. It feels like my body is deprived of oxygen. Like my organs are scrunching up like raisins. My throat is so dry and clouds of smoke aren't exiting my mouth. Because I wasn't breathing.

The single tear leaving my eye left behind a cold trace that burned my cheek.

"Avery! Babe, you need to breathe!"

"Avery!"

I hear you James. Just tell me how and I will.

Just tell me how. I can't seem to remember.

James? Can you hear me?

Why can't I breathe?

I'm trying.

I really am.

I see him. I see his glorious build, I see the eyes that captivated me from the first time I looked into them. They were filled with so much mischief and happiness, anger and despise. The most beautiful eyes I had ever seen held so many emotions. But now, why did they look so sad?

I wanted to tell him that it's okay. I wanted to let him know that everything will be fine. But I couldn't.

I saw his eyes glaze over. He was mind linking someone. I remember listening to him tell me about his conversation with Natasha. And how I felt so sad for her, for her pain and her loss.

She didn't only lose her mate. She lost him at the hands of her own father.

I really want to sleep. I need to close my eyes James.

White patches are now blurring my vision of the man in front of me. No. No please I want to see him. He's sad I need to be there for him.

I'm going to close my eyes for a while.

"AVERY!!!"

My eyes snapped open.

"AAAHHHH!" What's happening? Why does it hurt so badly?

"Make it stop! Please, please make it stop!"

I couldn't end it. The constant screaming in my head. I felt like something was trying to rip my skull open.

"PLEASE MAKE IT STOP!" No, it hurts, it hurts so bad.

"James hold this." Natasha is here.

I felt two hands on my head and something wet was pressed against my temples.

It's slowing down.

The screaming is getting less. The ripping is getting weaker.

Thank god.

"That's right sweetheart just breathe." Natasha whispered sounding out of breath.

A few minutes in and finally all that was left was silence. Oh wonderful silence. I closed my eyes and savored the moment before opening them up and seeing James. He was looking at me with worry. I reached out my hand and caressed his cheek. Feeling that jolt of electricity again.

His worry eased up a little bit. I'm glad.

Natasha's hands on my head dropped and I saw her panting behind me.

"Here, sit down." James led her to the bench and she sat down next to me.

"Thank you. So much." I was really grateful. But at the same time exhausted.

"James told me what happened to you, is it the same thing that's happened to me?"

James and Natasha looked at each other and Natasha looked back at me while James looked down at the ground.

"Yes. I'm afraid it is. When James mind linked Alex he quickly came to me and I knew what needed to be done." She answered truthfully.

"Who do you think is controlling me?" I can see that my question hit a sensitive spot. She grabbed the bench with both her hands, steadying herself. Then released a breath before shaking her head.

"This spell isn't like others Avery. Not everyone can do it. Only certain powerful wizards can control another person's mind and body. But being powerful isn't the only criteria."

Natasha looked at me with pity.

"You must share DNA with the one you're controlling." James finished the sentence and my eyes widened in horror.

Share DNA. But that means...

"I'm related to a witch?"

"Oh my goodness..." My voice hitched and I mimicked Natasha's hands as I too took hold of the bench, hoping it would be enough for me to not tumble over. I was panting for air.

They both nodded their heads.

"How did you break it?" I looked over to Natasha, she was smiling sweetly at me.

"When I yelled your name, it somewhat broke the contact between you and whoever is in your head. And I pressed sage dipped in saltrun to your temples to cleanse out the darkness. It's dark magic that's being used to control you, which is how I knew it would work. Only temporarily however. He will be able to reconnect within 24 hours and until then, we need to find a way to set up a barrier in your mind to keep him out."

A barrier. I feel like I am in a bad dream. But I know that no pinching will wake me up from this.

"How will this barrier work?" I needed to know what I'm getting myself into, however much I believe I can trust Natasha, I can't just surrender myself to her completely yet.

"It will work as a wall. To keep him out and you in. You will be in full control and depending on how strong he is we will be able to know for how long the wall will work. I will be able to sense that once I'm in your mind."

I nodded my understanding and looked down on the ground.

"Why did that happen earlier?"

"Because James told you. He told you what was happening and whoever is in your head didn't want you to know. What one doesn't know, one can't control. And the pain you felt was him fighting to keep his grip around you." Natasha spoke slowly and carefully so I didn't miss anything and so she didn't alarm me. She was a lovely woman. And having James near is what made me able to handle everything without breaking down.

But right now I was feeling exhausted. I needed rest. I needed my body and mind to heal from today's events and to organize everything before I got a migraine.

" Thank you for your help, both of you. But I really need to get some rest." They both nodded their heads and I quickly got up from my seat. Too quickly I realized because suddenly everything went black.

James' POV

---

Avery was still recovering from having been basically suffocated and Natasha's remedy also took a toll on her strength. So when Avery stood up I knew she wasn't going to be able to walk.

I got to my feet the second she stood and quickly caught her in my arms.

Natasha gave me a quick nod and I scooped Avery up in my arms. I realized that this is the second time I'm carrying her like this. Not that I mind neither did Blade, he was going mad in the back of my mind from having our mate this close to our body.

I held her tightly to me as we walked back to the house.

"You can't tell her James. She mustn't know." Natasha looked at me with determination and sadness mixed in one. Her dark brown eyes spoke volumes of the emotions she felt.

I looked down at Avery and saw her still body, limp in my arms. Her beautiful face with dried patches from the tears and her red nose from the cold.

She had been through so much. And regardless of what we wanted, much more was to come. Avery was a pawn in a game she didn't choose to play. She was the key player in a war that a young girl should never have to fight. This wasn't her choice but rather the fate she had been handed.

" I won't."

\* \* \*

As we walked into the house, Alex, Amber and Trish were standing by the staircase. When they saw Avery in my arms, Amber mind linked me

"Is she okay?"

"She is, for now. Meet me in my office in fifteen."

They all bowed their heads and I walked Avery up to her room.

I removed the comforter on her bed and gently placed her down. As I let go she released a groan and fluttered her eyes open.

"James?"

"Yeah it's me. You need to rest." I gently caressed her cheek and sat down next to her on the bed.

"I didn't like it." I was confused by her statement.

"Didn't like what?"

"Sofia touching you. I didn't like it." A smile made its way to my face and I grabbed her hand.

"I know. I'm glad to hear you say it though. It won't happen again."

"Good." She smiled back at me and closed her eyes. I placed a soft kiss on her forehead. At first she stiffened but as I held my lips there for a second, she started melting in to the touch and relaxing.

"Goodnight lo-" No. It's too soon. I can't say it.

Soon enough perhaps. When she knows who I am to her.

"Goodnight Avery."

"Night." She was already half asleep so I quietly got off the bed and put the comforter on her before walking over to the door and switching off the light.

I carefully closed the door behind me and made my way to my office where the others were waiting.

I walked into the office and all the ranked members were standing there and bowed their heads as I walked in.

"Please sit. This will take a while." I gestured with my hand for them all to take a seat and they did.

When everyone was sitting down I started briefing them on everything that had been said and done today. Amber and Alex already knew but the others didn't and it was their right to know regarding things happening within the pack.

---

After I had laid all the cards on the table and they all knew what it is that's going on with Avery they were all sitting wide eyed and staring at me. Except for Amber and Alex who knew almost everything already, they were mostly looking around the room skeptically and we wondered whether or not we had broken our friends.

Fucking hell say something...

"Uhm yeah I don't know what to say." Trish spoke. Her eyes were still so wide I was worried they'd pop out of her head and her mouth was hanging open.

"SHE'S BEING CONTROLLED BY A WIZARD!?" There we go. Jackson so diligently said. Or shouted may be the proper word for it.

"We're all werewolves in here dude, keep your fucking voice down." Alex, being the asshole he always is, was kind enough to respond.

Jackson glared at him and Alex didn't budge. Fucking children.

"Enough." One word and their focus was back on me.

"Good. Yes there is wizard out there controlling Avery's mind. However Natasha has managed to block them out for the next 24 hours. Tomorrow afternoon she will be putting a barrier inside Avery's head in order to keep the black magic out. It won't be permanent but it will buy us some time to find the wizard responsible."

Their eyes were now normal and they had gained back color to their faces. This pack is the strongest one in all of the United States. But one thing we didn't have much experience with, was magic. But we didn't become the strongest by being afraid and hiding. No. We researched, prepared and attacked. This time is no different.

"Alright. Do we know anything about this wizard or should we just go knock doors. Or do they live in cabins in the woods surrounded by crows? Or oh maybe they have underground bunkers where no one will find them." Jackson leaned back in his chair and wore a smug smile on his face. The bastard sure knew how to be annoying.

Alex smacked him behind the head, wiping the smug smile right off.

"They're people you idiot. They live amongst humans most of the time to blend in. Yes, some like to live more secluded in order to practice their magic more freely but they're not cave people."

"How do you know this, Alex?" Lisa asked with furrowed brows.

"Natasha, duh? Yeah she may be a bitch at times but sometimes she's fun talking to." He shrugged and looked at Lisa who just smiled and shook her head.

"Well do we know where to begin? What do we know about the wizard?" I felt every muscle in my body stiffen. My nails digging into my hands drawing blood. Do I tell them?

"James? You okay?" My sister's voice brought me back to reality. A choice needed be made.

"You know what, it's late. Let's continue this tomorrow." I watched as they all stood and said goodnight as they left the office. I leaned back and released a breath, massaging my temples and squinting. I felt a headache starting to emerge. When I glanced at the clock it said 2:30 and practice starts at 7:00.

"Fuck me." I groaned.

Alex stayed behind and sat down on the seat on the other side of the mahogany desk in front of me.

"So, brother. Spill." His facial features were stern and the vein on his forehead was throbbing.

I relaxed my body and put my hands on the desk, clutching my hands as I leaned forward.

## **Payment To the Alpha by Ms.M Chapter 25**

"Me and Natasha were talking earlier in the conference room and—"

I stopped talking when my office door swung open and slammed into the wall. Alex and I quickly got up on our feet.

And there she stood.

Covered in blood.

With a knife in her hand.

"James...help me..." Avery raised her hand out in front of her with the blade pointed inwards and was about to lunge it into her stomach.

"NO!" I jumped over my desk and with my werewolf speed I ripped the knife out of her hand and slammed her onto the wall. Pinning her hands to her sides.

"No, please no!" She yelled on top of her lungs as she tried to squirm out of my grip. In this moment I was glad she was human. Her human strength was nothing in comparison to mine or any other wolf, but especially mine.

I was pulled away from Avery by a force and was held in place in the middle of my office.

Avery was still as well and couldn't move a muscle. Natasha walked in with her arms raised keeping us frozen.

"Let me go!" She had no right using her magic on me. I'm the alpha and this is my pack. I felt Blade surfacing, furious by the disrespect. He was baring his teeth and ready to fight. I felt her hold getting lesser by the second.

"James, I will let you go but you need to stay there. You cannot go close to Avery understood?" Her eyes were glowing red as she spoke.

"Do you understand?!"

Blade, stand down!

'No, she's our mate!"

I know but there is nothing we can do. Natasha can help her. STAND DOWN.

'I swear by the goddess if she gets hurt...'

He was baring his teeth, saliva dripping from his mouth. And his nostrils flaring.

The chances of her getting hurt are far greater if we don't let Natasha take care of her.

Listen to me you mutt, I understand, she's our mate but we need to stand down. We will be right here the entire time!

'No. You don't understand. You keep denying your feelings for her when mine are as clear as ever. You want to love her but you're not letting yourself. When will you accept her, before or after we lose her?'

I won't let that happen.

'Neither will I.'

His last words weren't a statement, it was a warning. This damn dog.



I felt my eyes change back from their golden color to my normal blue as Blade stepped down. I know he's pissed at me right now but I do care about Avery. More so than anyone thinks.

I felt Natasha's magic on me die down and I was able to move again. So was Alex, I hadn't noticed how he was under her magic as well but I saw how he fell to the ground because she had held him while he was lunging at her.

Natasha looked at us, making sure we stayed where we stood before she started walking towards Avery. She was using both her hands, one holding Avery still and the other doing only goddess knows what. Avery's eyes turned white again and her mouth was open as if she was being exorcised.

Avery's POV

---

'Avery, you need to fight.'

How? How do I fight something that I do not see?

'How do you fight what you do see?'

I see my opponent and then I charge at it. No thinking, no planning. I see him and I know what to do. Or I chance and deal with the outcome.

'We will talk about your fighting strategy another time because that truly sounds like a terrible mess. But you know what you need to do. You charge. Not physically but mentally. Fight, Avery.'

Who are you?

'I'm not at liberty to tell you that just yet, but don't worry child, we will meet soon.'

Natasha's irises are as red as blood with prominent black veins crawling around her eye globes.

Her hands are keeping me still. She's using her magic.

She's strong.

Stop.

Natasha sure has grown stronger.

**STOP!**

The voice in my head is getting louder and louder. How am I supposed to fight? He's still weak from the extrication Natasha did on me. But he is still stronger than me and when he wants to get through, he does.

I see James and Alex staring at me like I'm a ghost. I see James' finger twitching, it must be hard for him to let go of control.

There is only one way to fix this. I need to kill Natasha, it's probably her doing this to me.

Wait what? No!

She needs to die, I have to kill her.

I see a knife laying on the pedestal to my right.

I am so sorry.

"AARRGGHH!" Everything I had, went into breaking myself free from Natasha's hold.

I saw James starting to panic as he tried to rush over. Natasha held up a finger and James stopped dead in his tracks.

"What is happening to her!?" Don't worry James. I'm gonna fix it.

"She's breaking free. Avery you need to try and fight him, I'm almost done!"

Now why would I want to fight when I can kill?

I felt a wicked smile form on my face and everyone else sees it too by the looks of it.

Let's play, shall we.

I felt my entire body working to break the hold. Then I felt it shatter, like putting pressure to a window and seeing it crack before it completely breaks, that's what it felt like.

I'm free, but I can't move. What the hell is this?

She must die, she's ruining everything!

My blood began to boil. My nails dug into my hands and I felt the veins in my temple start to throb. My shoulder went back and my head up as my lips tightened and formed a thin line. My nostrils were flaring and I felt my eye brows furrow.

'FIGHT AVERY!'

"AARRGGH!!" It hurts! Like someone is trying to press my skull together, turning my brain to mush.

Fight. I need to fight.

I was moving my arm, it was shaking trying to rise. My feet were trying to move and my eyes were set on the knife laying on the pedestal beside me.

Fight. I need to fight!

I pressed my arm down with all the energy that was left in me and held it by my side. It was like moving against gravity.

"Avery I'm almost done just a minute more!"

"HURRY!!" I couldn't keep him out much longer. I wasn't keeping him out. I was fighting him for dominance inside my own mind. I was at war with myself.

Fight Avery.

Fight.

Kill. Her.

I was shaking. My entire body was shaking from top to bottom and my hands were clutched together so tightly that I felt the blood circulation stopping. I pressed my lips together and my eyes were closed tightly. Everything and anything to focus.

I slammed the back of my head to the wall as hard as I could in frustration. I felt the drops of sweat falling from my face.

"Please hurry! I can't..."

"Almost there sweetheart, keep fighting."

Easier said than done. I thought to myself.

Stop fighting me.

Never.

Stop fighting. You want to kill her.

I... I don't. You do.

Stop fighting me AND KILL HER!

"NO!!" I fell to my knees. My body hovered over them as I finally broke down. The tears wouldn't stop. I was shaking like a scared puppy and sweating like I had run a marathon.

Why am I bleeding?

I felt a body cover my own. I didn't mind. I embraced and welcomed the comfort. The only comfort that could calm the storm going on inside me. He could catch the lightning and throw it away, suck in the thunder and blow it out in the form of a tornado, putting everything back in its place.

Yes. I welcomed it.

"Sweetheart?" I felt a hand on my hand and lifted my head. Natasha was standing there with her hands cupped in front of her and her eyes back to normal.

"We're all done." Her smile could warm you on the coldest of nights. I mustered up enough energy to smile back at her. Albeit a weak one.

"Thank you. Again." I said as I gave her a minor head bow.

"Anytime. Now you need to sleep. I promise nothing will disturb you this time." I nodded at her, agreeing that I needed sleep.

James carried me to my room again as I was too weak to walk.

He placed me down again and his eyes lingered on my face as if he was trying to memorize it.

I took his hand into mine and drew shapes with my finger on his palm.

"Stay with me?" James looked at the clock. It was 4:30 already.

"Practice starts at 7:00. But I would love to stay with you till then." He sported a kind smile as he got undressed, leaving his boxers on and climbed under the covers.

I don't think that I will ever be able to look at his semi-nude body without blushing.

I laid his arm under my head and I snuggled in close to him. I felt safe in his arms. Something I really needed right now.