

Chapter 12

Jasmine Pov

I woke up and got dressed for my normal packhouse duties. I know I would be cooking extra for the visitors that are here. Thankfully, no one was in the kitchen when I arrived. I looked at the time and realized it was still early. While I was preparing the mix for waffles, I felt the presence of someone coming in behind me. I kept my head focused on the meal I was preparing. They ended up coming beside me.

"Do you need any help with that?" The voice said. It was a voice I had never heard before. I looked up to see the most handsome man I had ever laid eyes on. I mean, Oliver was no doubt gorgeous, but this man was unbelievably handsome. He was 2 feet taller than me, with sleek short hair and olive-toned features, but what most compelled me was his gray eyes. They were mesmerizing, and I could get lost in them forever. His muscles were big and bulky, but they fit him. He was so handsome. I could feel Lunar looking at him questionably, but I didn't pay any attention.

He ended up smirking and I came to my senses. I had realized I had been checking him out WHILE he was watching me do it. I turned back to my mix, with a bit of blush on my cheeks. What in the world was that? Wait, he asked me a question. What was it???? Oh, yea. Did I need help? I found my voice.

"Um, no I am okay," I told him in a small voice. In truth, I was anything but okay. I had so many people to cook for and I was doing it alone. Who knows when people will start to fill in the kitchen hall? He seemed to notice my hesitation and went to the sink to wash his hands.

"If you're working by yourself and you have many people to cook for, I want to help you" he says and flashes me a smile. I could melt with that smile.

"Okay then" I decided. I was wondering if this was some prank, but he didn't seem like the type to pull anything like that. "You can stir up the egg mix," I told him, and he got to work.

"So, what's your name?" He asks. Does he want to know my name?

"My name is Jasmine. Jasmine White. "I told him. He nods, still mixing the eggs, but his eyes are on me. Why are my legs jelly right now?

"What is your name?" I asked and I could see him stiffen up. Did I speak too much? Fuck. "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to...." I start but he cuts me off.

"No sorry, I was just lost in my thoughts. My name is Xavier. Nice to meet you, Jasmine. You have a beautiful name", he says, and I blush, but I also shrink a little.

"What's wrong? Did I say something wrong"? He asks, stopping his mixing? I keep my head down.

"No, just not used to people calling me beautiful. No one here really talks to me, other than my best friend and her parents", I told him. Ugh, why did I just tell him that? He will think I'm a loser.

"That sucks for them. You seem like a real down-to-earth person. I saw you last night, by the way. If you don't mind me asking, why did you reject your alpha?" He asked me. Should I tell him?

"He isn't a great person. He may be to some people, but he isn't. At least, he never really was to me." I tell him, and I pause, stirring as the memories of abuse come into my head.

"Did he ever hit you?" Xavier asks and I stiffen up? I can tell he noticed the change in my demeanor.

"So, tell me things you like to do," he says, and I'm happy he changed the conversation.

"I like to train with my best friend," I tell him.

"Why don't you train with the pack?" he asks.

"I'm not allowed," I told him.

"Why not?" he asks.

"Something bad happened when I was younger. It was my fault, so the alpha closed me off from the others. I am only around the others to either cook or to clean before I go back to my hut", I told him, with the memory of my parents coming into my mind.

"I'm certain, whatever it was, it was not your fault. The past alpha here sounds like an ass, and so does the current one", he tells me, and I give him a small smile as we prepare the meat.

"My best friend Sabrina says it wasn't my fault, but I guess everyone in my pack said it so much to me, I started to believe it myself. It's why they abuse me", I told him, and then paused, as I realized why I had just said. Fuck, why did I tell him that? I looked up at him and I saw his eyes flicking back from black to gray. He is trying to control his wolf. I should be worried he was gonna hit me, but I feel strangely safe for some reason.

"They fucking hit you" he growls lowly. So, isn't he upset with me?

"I'm sorry I told you that. Please keep that between us, okay? I don't want them thinking I am telling everyone to feel sorry for me. I'd like to avoid as much conflict as I can", I told him. I can tell he is about to argue, but he looks at my face and his features soften, and he nods. I smile, happy he is listening.

"So what pack are you from?" I asked while I put the bacon and sausages in the oven. He smirks.

"I'm not from a pack. I live at the king's palace in Washington Dc", he tells me. He must be a servant. It would explain why he offered to help, though I couldn't imagine

anyone this gorgeous bowing to anyone. I had heard about the king. He is uptight and closed off, but people say he can be kind yet ruthless and deadly when provoked.

"Have you served the king long?" I asked and he gave me a confused look for a moment before answering.

"Yes, I have, for as long as I can remember, though he can be an asshole too," he says, and I laugh.

"I can understand that, but he has had your loyalty for a long time, so maybe he isn't too bad," I tell him, and he laughs a little.

"Why do you say that?" he asks me.

"I don't know. I guess anyone I would be loyal to for a long time would at heart be a wonderful person. For example, my best friend Sabrina. She is my sister by everything apart from blood. She is annoying sometimes, and sometimes I want to kill her, but I love her. She is fierce over people that are close to her, like me and her parents. I guess what I'm saying is I am loyal to her because of it. I know her heart. It is pure. If she were a queen, I would be glad to serve under her" he explained. He just smiles at me in admiration.

"So, you read hearts hunh" He taunts, and I roll my eyes.

"I heard he is looking for his mate" I stated and, those gray eyes lit up.

"No, he isn't fond of her, but it was just recently, so let's keep it between me and you.

No one else knows" he says. I do a gesture as if zipping my mouth.

"Consider my mouth shut," I tell him, and he laughs.

"Do you have a mate?" I asked him. He pauses.

"Yes I do, but she doesn't know yet," he says, looking a bit sad.

"Well, why not," I asked him.

"Just the circumstances surrounding her, but she will know soon. I've been waiting for my mate since I was a child, and she is the most beautiful lady I have ever met" He smiled to himself. I feel happy for him, but I don't know why it hurts a little for him to say that. It's his mate after all.

"Well, whoever she is, she is a very lucky woman. I can tell just by talking with you that you are a wonderful man. Appreciate her. Treat her like she is the luckiest woman in the world", I tell him.

"Oh, I absolutely will," he says with a smile on his face. His eyes were still twinkling. Out of nowhere, he throws a bit of flour on me, and it crosses my face.

"Hey, no fair," I started laughing as I threw some flour on his black shirt and face. We paused for a second and I wondered if maybe I had taken it too far, but he just started laughing at the most beautiful sound I had ever heard, and soon enough, I was laughing with him. I had never felt this good with anyone other than Sabrina. It

was a free feeling and it felt like, for the moment, it was just him and I as we laughed and wiped flour off ourselves.

“So, tell me about you,” I asked him. He knew a good bit about me. I knew nothing about him other than his name and where he lived.

"What do you want to know?" He asks and I shrug.

"I don't know. What do you like to do for fun?" I asked. He seems to think about it.

"I don't get out for much fun as I am working a lot," he says, and I nod.

"What's your favorite color?" he asks me, and I laugh a little.

"What?" Xavier said with his eyebrows raised.

"It's just.... No one has ever asked me that before," I told him, giggling. He smiles at me.

"But to answer your question, my favorite color is white," I told him.

"Like your last name," he says, and now I'm giggling harder. He is such a dork.
"Yes... Like my last name", I told him. I hadn't been aware of how close we had moved

to each other. He seemed to realize it too and backed away a little. Is he blushing?? I smiled and lowered my head a bit, so he didn't see my red face. We were so lost in ourselves that a throat cleared behind us and made us both jump a bit. Me more than him.

"I see you two met each other" Sabrina said, coming in. She looks between Xavier and me.

"Hey, Sabrina. You know Xavier?" I asked and she asked.

"Yeah, I met him last night. I was going to introduce you, but it looks like I don't need to", she says, and raises both her eyebrows in a gesture. I rolled my eyes. She is so dramatic.

"He has a mate, Sabrina. Don't be a nasty girl," I told her, smiling politely at Xavier. He just looks amused, and Sabrina is smirking softly.

Xavier and I had finished breakfast for everyone and me, him, and Sabrina laid it out on the kitchen hall table.

We left through a backdoor right after, hearing people starting to come in. We all walked to my hut. I felt a bit uncomfortable with Xavier seeing it. What if he decides I'm trash because I live there?

"So, Sabrina, did you know Xavier lives in the palace? He works there", I told her. She gave Xavier a questionable look before looking back at me. What was that about?

"Yea, he told me, I think," she says. We end up at my hut and go inside. It isn't dirty, but I kind of shift some things around to make room for Xavier to come in. He looks really upset.

"This is where they make you sleep," he says. I can feel the anger coming from him. Is he mad at me?

"Y... Yes," I say slowly in a bit of a stutter. Sabrina looked at me with a sad look. She understands how I feel.

"This isn't fit for my worst enemy to live in," he says, still upset. "Where do you use the Rest Room, or cook for yourself? He asks. I hesitated to tell him.

"There is an outhouse in the back and Sabrina and her parents bring me food from her house," I told him.

"This is a fucking outrage" he growls. His voice is a little deeper and I see his wolf coming out, but I also feel something else. A power. Maybe it's just his aura. He keeps shaking his head to control himself. I didn't know what to say, and for some reason, I felt a bit overwhelmed.

"Excuse me for a moment please," I told them both and I left the hut. I stop in front of my parent's memorial and sit on the ground, letting the air soothe me. I can feel a presence behind me, and I know it's Xavier and Sabrina. They are silent, but they sit on each side of me. I close my eyes, and I can see memories of my parents. When I open my eyes, both Sabrina and Xavier are both looking at me concerned. Sabrina leans her head against my shoulder.

"Xavier, this is a memorial to my mom and dad. I had to create my own because of my mistake from years ago. The Alpha won't let me visit their current sites." I told him. I can see more anger in his features, but he changes it to a soft look.

"What happened?" He asks. I looked towards the stones. I knew the question was coming.

"My parents were the betas of this pack. 3 years ago, Sabrina and I went into the forest. It was something we had been doing since we were small children. We liked playing in the leaves and making piles. It was our thing. There was never any danger in the forest. On that day, we came across a few rogues. They were gonna attack us when both of our parents showed up. Sabrina and I left with her parents while mi..... mi....." I explained, but I could feel myself tearing up. I couldn't speak to anyone.

"Her parents stayed behind and fought them, giving us a chance to get away. Our soldiers were sent to fight them, but they were too late. Her parents were gone and one of the rogues escaped. He hasn't been heard from since. The alpha and luna blamed her for not having a guardian with her, but it was not her fault. We were oblivious of danger, since nothing ever happened in our forest. Her brother, who happened to end up being my mate" beat her, and almost killed her until the current alpha stopped him. Before you ask, yes, I rejected him, but he took his anger out on Jasmine." Sabrina explained. I could feel her getting upset as her breathing changed. I looked over to Xavier. He had a painful look on his face as he looked at me, and I could tell he was looking at my scars. I turn away.

"I am okay now," I told him, but Sabrina didn't want to hear it. That's bullshit and you know it." She says, but I just keep quiet. She looks at Xavier.

"Ever since that day, they have lowered her status to the runt of the pack. They make her cook and clean for them. They made her life here. Her parents were killed in this

exact spot." She growls and I can feel waves of fury coming from Xavier. I don't know why, but I want to comfort him, but that would be inappropriate since he has a mate. I don't want him feeling sorry for me.

"They abuse her daily. They cut her, burn her, hit her, push her, and if she ever retaliates, they threaten to kill me and my family. Ever since that day, my parents have been training us to fight. We are great as fighters, but it is hard for her to try to ignore the urge to hit them back, but she does", Sabrina says. I look at her and she looks proud. I smiled, wiping my eyes from the tears that had built. Xavier startled me by taking my hand.

"I just want you to know I think you are the bravest person in the world to have gone through all of that and still keep a smile on your face. I know you have heard this from Sabrina, but what happened back then was not your fault. Your parents died with honor, giving their lives for yours. I know they are watching over you right now, and I know that they are proud of the woman you have become. You're a fighter." He says and kisses my hand. I have tears in my eyes and him and Sabrina, both wipe them away. I look at the memorial.

I feel the gust of wind wrapping around me and I feel their presence as if confirming what he is saying is true. After that, I couldn't hold it back anymore. I poured out my tears. Xavier put me safely in his arms while Sabrina put her head on my shoulder, and they held me as the pain of my parents came out. It finally all just came out.