



10 Seemingly A Chance

~Liam~

Sleep eluded me the entire night. My mind was consumed by nightmares, haunted by the terrifying possibilities of what might have befallen Sophia. Restlessness permeated the air, not just within me, but also evident in Alex. Eventually, I sat up in bed and gazed out at the moon through my window. Its radiant glow captivated me, and in my desperation, I found myself wondering if it held some wisdom. Could the moon speak to me? Could it somehow reveal the whereabouts of Sophia? Perhaps its luminous beams had touched her in some way tonight. I entertained these thoughts, hoping for a sign or inspiration on where to search and whom to reach out to. But deep down, I knew it was mere wishful thinking.

The reality was that as each day passed, the chances of finding Sophia diminished. We were now entering the third day, and the weight of that grim possibility pressed heavily upon me. Dread filled my thoughts, refusing to be averted, as I confronted the unsettling notion that time was slipping away.

Morning arrived, and Harper and I embarked on our customary run through the woods. As we made our way, we were joined by Marvin, Miles, Oliver, Lilly, and the triplets. We had hoped that our visit would be brief and that we would quickly return to Grizlo, but our parents held us firmly in their grasp. Arriving at a stream that served as our rendezvous point, where a metal trunk housed our spare clothes, we gathered together. This spot had become a familiar meeting place during our runs.

I was the first to shift back to human form and retrieve the clothes from the trunk. Though it seemed that the collection hadn't been refreshed in some time, I couldn't help but feel grateful. The omegas responsible for maintaining the trunk never failed to ensure we had a fresh supply of clothes. I tossed the shorts to the guys and the oversized t-shirts to the girls. They all swiftly changed into their respective garments. We settled down by the stream, contemplating our next course of action.

I relayed the details of my father's conversation with Christian to the group. Charlotte voiced the question that lingered in all of our minds.

"Why does this situation feel larger than we initially thought?" she pondered, and I found myself without an answer.

"I just want to find her," I confessed, my voice filled with a mix of desperation and longing.

"I never had the chance to tell her how I truly felt. I need to see her and express my emotions. Moving on from this as quickly as my father hopes seems impossible. It's incredibly challenging to stop caring about someone who has been such a significant part of my life. I can't just walk away," I expressed, feeling the weight of my emotions. Harper reached out and gently touched my shoulder.

"We understand, Liam, and we're here to support you in finding her. Just say the word. I might have said some things yesterday, but I hate seeing you like this. If you want us to sneak away and conduct our own investigation, we've decided to do it," Harper declared, surprising me with her determination.

The idea of leaving the estate and embarking on an adventure to find Sophia seemed exhilarating, but I immediately considered the potential consequences. I thought about our parents and realised that it would be unfair to put them through such worry and uncertainty.

As I contemplated the situation, my father's voice echoed through the air, summoning us to his lounge. Had something significant occurred? We left the stream and hastened our way back to the mansion. Once inside, we neglected to change our attire, even though it wasn't entirely appropriate. It was only us, after all.

We made our way to the lounge.

The television screen was already on, and to my astonishment, I saw a video featuring Mike, Margret, and a visibly distraught Sophia. They didn't appear to be held captive, but the surroundings indicated an underground setting. It was difficult to determine the specific location since we had numerous underground hideouts, and every time my father shut one down, new ones would swiftly emerge. Therefore, we opted not to dwell on that particular detail. My mother approached me.

"They are safe, Liam. Mike is sending this message because of you," she informed me, her tone laced with a hint of annoyance.

I noticed that the video wasn't playing on a typical television station, so I inquired about its source. My mother revealed that it had been mailed to Head Enforcer Golubev by an unidentified sender they had been unable to trace.

My father pressed the play button, and I focused on Mike's words, ready to listen to what he had to say.

"I want to begin by expressing my sincere apologies to Alpha Christian for the trouble I have caused. I deeply regret that it has come to this, but please understand that I had no other choice. I wish I could go back in time and remain oblivious to the circumstances, but that is not within my power. Through this message, I humbly implore Alpha Christian, the Alpha council, the king's council, and the crowned prince to find it in their hearts to forgive me for my actions. Although I cannot divulge the reason behind my actions, I earnestly request that the search be called off," Mike spoke directly into the camera, his gaze unwavering.

"Prince Liam, I offer you my sincere apologies, as I understand the depth of your feelings when I saw you two nights ago. Please know that what occurred was not intentional or born out of hatred. I also plead with you to let go of Sophia. As you can see, she is alive and well. I implore you to release her and find peace in your own life. Perhaps, one day, the truth will be revealed. But until then, I simply want to say sorry," the video abruptly ended, leaving us with a sense of incompleteness.

The recording left us with more questions than answers. Its vagueness made it clear that the sole purpose was to plead for the search to cease and for me to move on. However, the motivations behind such a risk and the true intentions remained unclear. There had to be more to it, but we were left in the dark, unsure of what would transpire next.

"There is definitely more to this situation than meets the eye," Uncle David astutely observed, and I was relieved that he shared my scepticism. I turned to my father, seeing the worry etched on his face. My uncles also expressed their concerns, with Uncle David and Uncle Dominic displaying a touch of frustration.

"Alpha Christian mentioned that he would bring this matter to the council. I believe we should pursue it," Uncle Dominic proposed, his gaze focused on me. It was evident that he made the suggestion for my benefit, and I felt grateful for his support. He had a knack for being cool like that sometimes.

"We cannot allow this to happen to our dear Liam," Uncle Dominic continued, his eyes still fixed on me.

"I mean, it's been years since we've truly had any fun," he added with a mischievous smile, and I hoped he would say what I was hoping to hear.

"I strongly believe that this matter warrants further investigation. Trust me, if we bring it to the attention of Leo and Devin, they will take action. I sense something fishy was transpiring in Grizlo," Uncle Dominic voiced, and I felt a sense of relief knowing that my uncle shared my perspective. The fact that none of his own children was involved likely allowed him to approach the situation with clearer judgment, unclouded by the sentiments that may have influenced my parents.

Uncle Theo objected, stating we had no direct connection with Grizlo, and my heart sank a bit because he was right. Three weeks was a long time to wait for Alpha Christian to bring the matter to the

council.

"Yes, you're right, Theo. We don't have any direct involvement with Grizlo," Uncle David acknowledged, understanding his concern. Uncle David turned his gaze towards me, assessing my countenance.

"You won't recklessly jeopardise your life or the lives of your cousins on the matter, will you?" Uncle David inquired, and I shook my head in response. As much as I cared about Sophia, I wasn't selfish to ruin my family for it.

"Very well then. I propose that we appoint Justin to oversee Grizlo for the time being. After all, I have a deep connection to the place. Liam and the others can work closely with him," Uncle David suggested, surprising me with his willingness to send his own son to Grizlo.

"What?" Aunt Nicole exclaimed in protest.

"We were supposed to head to the east. Perhaps Justin might find someone there. Besides, didn't Christain say they were looking at Kaizen and Braile? Why send our son to Grizlo?" she argued, but Uncle David shook his head.

"Who's to say Justin won't find someone special in Grizlo?" Uncle David replied with a knowing look in his eyes. Reminding her they had met and married in Grizlo, and I fought back the urge to smile.

"Besides, it will be a temporary arrangement. We will conduct our investigation as well, but we'll work behind the scenes," Uncle David explained, outlining his plan. I glanced at my father, recognising that he held the final decision in his hands.

"When we return from the east, we will finalise this plan. We must also ensure that Justin is willing to take on the position. We can't force him to assume a role solely for the purpose of investigation. Additionally, Leo will provide valuable insight," my father declared. While it appeared to be a distant solution, I remained hopeful that he would agree. I knew that once we arrived in Grizlo, my predicament would be one step closer to resolution.

After my father dismissed us, a sense of relief washed over me. I began to walk away when Charlotte chased after me and handed me her phone. I instantly knew it had something to do with Sophia. Unfortunately, I was yet to retrieve my own line, so I made a mental note to seek Kappa Wilson's help with it.

"I received four calls from an unknown number. I believe it might be Sophia, but I don't want to call back in case it's a secret communication. I think it's best if you hold onto it," Charlotte explained, and I expressed my gratitude. I swiftly left the mansion and sprinted back to the bungalow. As soon as I entered my room, the phone started ringing, and I answered it immediately.

"Hello," I managed to say, my heart racing. Sophia's voice resonated on the other end.

"Li," she said, and before she could say anything else, my worries spilled out.

"Are you alright, Sophia? Are you safe?" I asked anxiously, pausing for her response.

"We are okay for now, Li," she replied in a hushed voice, and I sensed



that her safety was still precarious.

"Don't ever say goodbye to me again. I'm searching for you and doing everything I can to ensure your safety and protection," I pleaded with her, my voice filled with determination. Over the phone, I heard a snuffle.

"I'm sorry I got you involved in this mess, Li. I truly am sorry," she said, her words laced with remorse. I knew the video was one of the reasons behind her apology, but I couldn't dwell on it. I had to focus on what mattered most—finding a way to bring her and her mother to safety, away from their current location and out of the clutches of the law.

"Do you have any idea where you might be?" I managed to ask, my concern evident in my voice.

"We arrived at an island. My mother and I are being held in a heavily guarded building. I believe they are using us as leverage to control my father. I don't know the exact location, but I will try to find out and communicate it to you," she explained, and my relief was mixed with frustration.

"Did you notice anything distinctive when you arrived?" I inquired further, hoping for any clue that could aid our search.

"We were blindfolded during the journey. Our blindfolds were only removed once we were inside the building. They used a strong lavender scent to mask the natural smells of the area. It had a distinct alcoholic base. There was also a strong, constant wind, but I couldn't see much as there were no windows where they'd kept me. It seems like they have planned everything meticulously. I believe

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they are using us as a means to manipulate my father. I don't fully understand the situation, but I want to assure you that it doesn't seem like they intend to kill us," she revealed, providing some reassurance amidst the uncertainty.

"Please, Sophia, keep a low profile and do everything you can to stay alive. Don't ever say goodbye to me or ask me to move on without you because I won't. Don't ask for the impossible. There's something I should have told you, but I was waiting for your eighteenth birthday. We were supposed to discuss it in person, but I won't wait any longer. So please, hold on tightly," I declared, my determination and love evident in my words. I heard her let out a sigh of relief.

"I will, Li. I will hold on for as long as I possibly can," she assured me, and we ended the call. Her words lifted my spirits, and I hoped that fate would be kind to us. Despite being just eighteen, I was certain of my feelings and resolute in my heart. I would not let her slip away.

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