

Chapter 37 : A Safe Place

Aunt Regan was not expecting such an answer. To her Anaya didn't seem like someone who didn't attend school or behaved uncultured.

Roman had told her about Anaya and her condition in hopes that the environment in the house will be made suitable for her recovery. Aunt Regan wanted to help as much as she could.

What how should she respond to this? Should it be sympathy? Regret that she missed out opportunities? Aunt Regan didn't think it will make any difference.

There were so many layers to Anaya's life that it may take an entire lifetime to peel them off one by one and find the little Anaya that was exhausted and give up on life hiding inside.

"I didn't go to school either." Aunt Regan admitted, "In fact I dropped out right in the middle of middle school."

Anaya's back straighten a little and she turned her head slightly to the side, indicating that she was listening.

"Why?" She asked.

"Because I wanted to be an actress and my parents didn't think I was cut out for it." Aunt Regan laughed heartily, "Now that I'm at their age, even I think I wasn't cut out to be an actress."

Anaya smiled slightly too. Aunt Regan had a very jolly character. She liked it. Aunt Regan sighed secretly in her heart. She managed to steer from the topic and make Anaya smile, that was some progress right there.

Later on she will have a good conversation with the Alpha and discuss some necessary things.

Anaya packed all the lunch boxes and stacked them to one side to clear up the counter. She cleaned up everything and stood to the side and watched aunt Regan work like a hurricane.

There weren't any servants around to help her either. In fact, the entire mansion only had a selected few servants who were always busy with their own tasks and the kitchen was mainly handled by aunt Regan.

Even then she didn't let Anaya help with breakfast. The most she could do was pass a few things to aunt Regan and then get looked at with the threatening eyes that commanded her to go back

and stand quietly in the corner.

The 'threatening' eyes were not scary at all. Aunt Regan wanted to send Anaya back to her room but the girl insisted on staying and helping, in front of Anaya's insistence, even she melted off and let her stay to th side.

"Have this while you are waiting. I told you to go and rest but you silly girl won't listen to me." Aunt Regan muttered and handed a Banana for Anaya to eat. Anaya looked up and then took it. She didn't look down again which made her face visible to aunt Regan.

Anaya held the banana and slowly peeled off the skin and took a small bite. Aunt Regan saw this and couldn't stop smiling. Anay was so lovely when she is distracted away from the loneliness.

"What do you like to eat? Everyone has a preference early in the morning." Aunt Regan asked as she started on breakfast for Alpha and Easton. The kids didn't want breakfast so they will be stuffed with fruits before going to school.

"Anything is fine." Anaya replied. One side of her cheek was bulged because of the banana and it looked cute.

Aunt Regan washed her hands and started

prepping up as she asked, "I am making pancakes and custard for Alpha and Easton since it's their favourite, so is that okay for you too?"

Anaya nodded. She's never had custard before so that was something new. Pancakes were a staple in their house too since Charlotte liked to eat it for breakfast.

Anaya's father had brought custard once but her mom and Charlotte didn't like it so it was never brought again. Since they didn't like the custard, the left over was thrown away. They didn't ask if Anaya wanted to try some of it. They must have forgotten about her since she was in the attic.

Today aunt Regan was making custard so Anaya will have a chance to try it. Anaya felt good about it.

"Oh? Anaya is here too."

Anaya's head calmly went down and she stood to the side to let Easton enter the kitchen. She was startled by his sudden appearance behind her but the lack of reaction was a bit concerning.

Roman was right behind Easton and lightly shoved him, "You are not free Easton. Get what you want and leave."

Easton grumbled under his breath and entered the kitchen. The fruit basket was an abnormally large basket that was filled to the brim with all kinds of seasonal fruits. Easton grabbed a few bananas and sweet limes.

Anaya watched as Easton balanced everything in his two hands and left the kitchen. Once he was gone Roman gave all his attention to Anaya.

"Good morning, did you sleep well?"

Anaya nodded, "Good morning Alpha."

Roman had made plans to talk to Anaya today. It was going to be a difficult task since Anaya didn't feel the mate bond between them. Anyway, Roman would still try.

"There are a few things that need to be discussed." Roman said, "Let's have a small meeting after breakfast?"

This was said after a lot of consideration from Roman's side. He didn't know how to say it and it took him a few tries to come up with a sentence that didn't sound like he was about to issue punishments. There was a lot of practice involved in it.

Now that Charlotte and Easton were gone for

training and kids will be off to school in a while, so they will have some time to themselves to talk it out nicely.

Anaya was in fact a little worried what this meeting was for. She served no purpose other than living. What could an Alpha possible have to discuss with her?

That alone was a matter of concern for the ever insignificant Anaya. She nodded and accepted it anyway because refusing was never an option. Aunt Regan didn't pay attention to them while Alpha was speaking to Anaya and as soon as he was done, she thought of something.

"Anaya dear, can you please call the kids? They will forget to take their lunch."

Anaya nodded and left the kitchen. Although aunt Regan was being subtle about it, Anaya knew that she probably wanted to talk to Alpha about something and didn't want Anaya to hear it. Anaya took small steps away from the kitchen so they can have plenty of time to talk.

When Anaya left aunt Regan placed the bowl of batter aside and wiped her hands. She had a slightly concerned look in her eyes as she looked at the retreating figure of Anaya.

"Alpha, I have a few things to say about Anaya."
Aunt Regan said.

Roman kept looking at Anaya until she disappeared from his sight. Then he paid attention to aunt Regan and asked, "What is it?"

"Since you asked me to help with Anaya, I tried to interact with her. But there are some things that I noticed were not right. After waking up she directly came to the kitchen when I was making hot chocolate for the kids. I asked her if she wanted any and she refused. I've seen many things in life and can probably say what a person wants and doesn't want from their expression. Anaya wanted it but didn't take it." Aunt Regan said, "It may not be a big deal but it bothers me how she is reluctant to accept something. Even if she wants something, she doesn't think it's okay to have it."

"Then, when I asked her to deliver the hot chocolate over to the kids, she readily agreed as if she was waiting for a chore to be given to her. She even forgot to ask where they were training." Aunt Regan concluded with her own views, "I feel that the way she lived in her pack was extremely toxic. Inorder to help her, we first have to show her what it is like to be in a normal family. For her, it must be a usually routine to get up and make breakfast

for everyone, like she tried to do today. She functions like a robot and does the same thing everyday."

Aunt Regan was speaking based on her own way of thinking. She could more or less understand the way Anaya's mind worked.

Roman pursed his lips together as he listened. He already guessed that Anaya must have had an extremely difficult life in Blue Stone but when he has to hear from someone else just how many things are wrong with Anaya, it gave him an increasingly uncomfortable feeling. He knew how broken she was, and he wanted to fix her. He was trying to help her. He was trying his best. He just doesn't know how. Not yet.

"Alpha, Anaya didn't even go to school." Aunt Regan said.

Roman was shocked to hear it, "What?"

Aunt Regan sighed, "I asked Anaya about her age and school. Anaya said that she dropped out before starting middle school."

Roman didn't know that. He didn't know a lot of things. It won't be wrong to say that he didn't know anything about Anaya. She didn't go to school, was kept at home and abused for who knew how many

years. How did she survive all these years? Alpha Roman couldn't even imagine Anaya, who was a little child, being exposed to so much pain and toxicity all the time.

His heart ached for her and in that instance Roman wanted to tear apart Blue Stone pack more than anything.

If only he had tried to find her. If only he was more invested in looking for his mate, maybe Anaya would have a few years less of mental and physical pain. If only Roman wasn't so busy with political matters and a little more sensitive towards feelings.

Roman was filled with guilt and regret. Some things were meant to be, just like Roman and Anaya were. But they met a little too late. Anaya was already in this state.

But so what? If she was broken, then he'd fix her. It will take some time, maybe a lot of it. Maybe years. But he believed that one day he will be able to cast away the pains in Anaya's heart and fill it with so much happiness and joy that she won't ever think of those dark days again.

Once he was sure of himself, he reassured aunt Regan as well.

"Don't you worry aunt Regan. Anaya will be fine. We will compensate her with so much love and care that she will eventually forget about all the pain and suffering of those years." Roman said and smiled, "It will be a long process but it's not impossible. Anaya will be fine."

Aunt Regan nodded, "Yes. I am sure you will do your best."

"I cannot do this alone. A happy environment needs many elements. You, Easton, the kids and I will work together to give Anaya a better place where she can be herself without worries. And for that you have to play a major role."

Aunt Regan smiled at the thought. She was always ready to help.

"What do I have to do?" She asked.

"Nothing too different from what you always do. Be a parent figure for all of us, that's it. Anaya needs a safe place, I want to be that for her. But she won't tell me everything or may even hide some things from me." Roman said, "For now please try your best to be that safe heaven for Anaya. So she won't have to bottle up everything. She must be able to freely communicate with you. Only this way we will be able to understand what she really wants."

Aunt Regan teared up a little at the thought. She nodded hurriedly and accepted it. She will do everything in her capacity to help Anaya.

"That's all aunt Regan. Thank you." Roman gave her a small hug.

Aunt Regan wiped her eyes and patted his back, "Okay, let me make breakfast now."

Roman chuckled, "Is that pancake batter? Should I give it a try"

He recieved a glare in return, "Don't you dare! I've only made so much, you will ruin everything!"

Roman lifted his hands in surrender and backed up. Just then the teenagers flooded into the kitchen with their school bags.

"Alpha, will you train with you in the evening?" Kruger asked after he stuffed his lunch box in the bag.

"Yes, today I'll be there. So don't even try to sneak off."

"Alpha! Bring Anaya along too! I want to show her the moves I learnt recently!" Georgia said. She was standing with Anaya, holding her arm close. Tina was on the other side and holding Anaya's other hand, she also nodded like a hen pecking rice.

Roman took a look at Anaya and saw her smiling slightly. Some of the gloominess had left her face, replaced by a little shine in her eyes. Roman immediately nodded to their request, "Okay, I will bring Anaya along so make sure to do well, you don't want to embarrass yourself in front of her right?"

Tina laughed, "Of course not!"

Anaya smiled a little wider when she saw Logan and Mason opening their lunch box to sneak a few gold fish into their mouth.

Tina and Georgia were holding her arms because they genuinely liked her. Anaya lightly stretched out her palms and used two fingers to hold their hands back. The touch was so light that they couldn't even feel it. Anaya was starting to like this group of teenagers.

(A/N - Thank you everyone for you comments! I am so lucky to have such understanding readers! I will try my best to write a lot and keep y'all satisfied! And follow my IG account (authorskylar01) for news about updates and other details about new upcoming stories!)

