

Chapter 23

Erin's eyes widened, lips parted slightly in shock. Maria's voice kept ringing in her head.

'Alpha's mate died'

How did she not notice this? She thinks back to when she first saw Derrick till now. True, he's always seemed to carry this dark and heavy cloud around him. He's always had this huge chunk of darkness hovering around him but not once did it cross her mind that maybe, just maybe he lost his mate.

Heck! It didn't even cross her mind that he had found his mate. She truly thought he was perhaps Samantha's mate, considering how attached the lady was to him. Now, she's hearing that they aren't the true mates she thought they were.

"What?" She croaks out after a beat, her thoughts running wild.

"All I can tell you is that, it was very tragic. It's shocking to see him like this with you. Most of us, if not all are shocked by this development. Also, you are walking around with his scent on you. It's a sight we never thought we would see. You even shared a room with him." Maria says, the mischievous glint was back in her eyes.

Erin didn't have it in her to caution the lady about her words. Her head still roaming on what she just heard. She smiled, although knowing it came out a bit strained.

"I- I should leave." She replied, suddenly feeling very scrutinized. Maria smiled and nods, she walks back to the maid who was now slicing some onions. Erin watches for a minute how she takes over from the maid, already telling her what to do. After all, she is the head maid.

Erin walks out from the kitchen, the new information she just got, heavy in her mind. She had so many questions and knew she'd get no answers, after all, it doesn't concern her but she's unable to shake off the thought of Derrick feeling so lonely and broken after his mate's death.

When she was with Liam, not once did she ever think he would be able to rip off her mate bond. She had seen him angry, pissed, irritated and disgusted but not once did she think all of that would be directed at her. Not once did she think all of that would've happened actually. She remembered the pain she felt after he ripped off their bond like it was some bandage being ripped off. It was excruciatingly painful. It felt like a part of her was being ripped apart, like her soul was ripped into two. It was horrifying.

Did Derrick feel the same after his mate's death? Did he feel the same pain or was it different? Did he wish for the moon goddess to take him just like she did? Did he want so bad to change the end of time?

Her palms felt clammy with sweat, she couldn't understand why she felt

overwhelmed and disturbed at the revelation that he lost his mate. She rubbed her palms against the skirt she wore, gnawing on her lower lip, deeply lost in thought without even realizing where she was headed until she hit something.

The impact had her covering her stomach protectively without realizing it, her eyes squeezed close as she braced herself to fall or stumble but instead she doesn't. She opens her eyes to see the person who had saved her, his hands wrapped around her arm to help her stand firmly.

She swallows heavily when his eyes drops to her stomach, she immediately drops her hand but it's a tad too late, even her reaction had him suspicious.

"Watch where you are going to, you could've injured yourself." He says. Erin blanched, surprised as this is the first time the beta would speak to her. She's never heard him talk to her directly. It's always the side glare and looks. She's made do with the fact that he doesn't like her and tried her best to stay out of his way.

Erin nods stiffly before bowing, shifting aside to allow him space to pass, not wanting to block his way any further. Alex made no move to walk away, instead he stared at her for a second, lips palmed into a thin line.

“What’s going on? Are you okay Erin? Alex?” Amelia’s voice came from behind, sounding worried and maybe a little panicked. Honestly, Erin is glad Amelia had taken a liking to her. She’s never had someone like her genuinely like this. In the blue moon pack, it was different. Everyone that came up to her to be friend always wanted something. Be it a land, a space to open a store, a marriage proposal for someone in the family, they always wanted something. Having Amelia in this new pack who had taken a liking to her and is treating her like a friend, it helped a lot.

Amelia placed her hand on Erin’s shoulder, eyebrows knitted in worry. She knows Alex and knows what he could do. Her eyes lift to Alex’s amused ones.

“What happened?” She asked.

“I bumped into him but that’s it-” Erin replied, facing the beta who quirks an eyebrow up. He smiles at her but anyone who was there could see he was struggling to keep up with the smile.

“It’s fine, Be careful next time. I might not be there to catch you.” He says, smiling almost sweetly at Erin, she would’ve totally been fooled if not for the dry, unamused and very serious look in his eyes. Although his lips told a different message, his eyes was telling the truth. He looked at her, eyes unwavering and hard, as though he wanted her to see.

Amelia cleared her throat, mentally reminding herself to speak to Alex later.

“Excuse me, Amelia.” Alex says, bowing a bit to Amelia then walks away. Erin’s eyes stuck on his retreating figure. Amelia sighs, shifting her legs so she could face Erin, she quirks an eyebrow up when she notices Erin looking at Alex. Amelia watches Erin watch Alex.

“Did he say something?” She asked, jolting Erin out of her reverie. Not missing the way Erin flinched at her voice. Was she that deep in thought?

“No, nothing. He did nothing.” Erin rushed out, silently berating herself for sounding like a fool. She looks at Amelia who had her arms wrapped around her chest.

"I- I was looking for his majesty."

"That reminds me, did it work?" Amelia asked curiously.

Erin's cheek heats up, a shade of pink sitting prettily on her cheeks. Amelia resisted the urge to coo.

"Yes, I was looking for him so I could thank him. I'm very thankful for what he did for me."

"-Ah, He isn't back yet but do let him know when he does. I'm sure he would appreciate the feedback." Amelia winked, loving the way Erin flushed easily, her neck growing red.

Erin cleared her throat, "I Um.. can I ask a question?" She asked and Amelia nods, grabbing Erin's hand so they'd walk towards the garden.

"T-The Alpha- The alpha's mate died?" She blurts stupidly as they stepped out into the garden.

Amelia halts in her steps, she snapped her head at her. Erin winced internally at how fast Amelia looked at her, almost snapping her neck in the process but of course she couldn't.

"Did Alexander tell you that? Was that what he was discussing with you? That son of a fucker." She growled angrily. Eyes changing into a bright yellow in an instant. Erin has come to understand that all Alpha blood can easily change the color of their eyes. Especially those in the royal line. They are far more stronger than a regular alpha.

"No, no, no, no. I overheard it." Erin rushed out, averting her eyes when Amelia looks at her.

"You're lying and you're going to tell me why you're lying." She grabs Erin by the arm, eyes stuck on her as though trying to unravel the truth. Her manicured fingers digging into the soft flesh of Erin.

"Who told you that?" She snarled, eyes daring and definitely provoked. Erin swallowed hard, never had she seen Amelia act this way, it was surprising and also scary.

"I- I'm sorry. I didn't.." she couldn't talk, not wanting to put the head maid in trouble. She can't do that.

Amelia seemed to read her unwillingness as her fingernails stopped digging so harshly into her skin, her grip on Erin's arm loosening.

"We don't speak of that. Make sure you never mention that to anyone and I mean anyone. It's a taboo." She says, her orbs slowly settling into her calm brown ones.

Erin nods, wincing internally from the stinging in her arm. "I'm sorry." She says. Amelia nods, she gulps visibly and nods again, looking back at the door that lead to the house. She looks at Erin one last time before turning to leave. Erin watched her walk away, leaving her with the heaviness in her heart.

Erin sat by the kitchen island, a tray of sliced cucumbers in her hands, listening to the conversation the two maids in the kitchen were having.

"She said she wanted it dark and now she wants it white, do it accordingly. We don't want her yelling at us." One of them snaps.

"I'm doing exactly that, can you help get that-?" The short one points to the bowl of sweet corn in the zinc. Erin tuned out of their conversation, thinking back to what had happened with Amelia in the garden. It is still very shocking to her. She shouldn't have even brought that up with her seeing as she's the Alpha's sister. She sighed, mentally berating her decisions. All she knows how to do is jump from frying pan to fire. How does she gain such a good friendship and then loose it in a matter of days? Only Erin can.

She's jolted out of her thoughts when Maria and another maid rushed into the kitchen, their faces a bit alarmed.

"What's wrong?" She asks, watching as Maria kept panting, now wondering what happened.

"Alpha Maxwell is coming to the pack in two days time." Maria blurts.

Erin raised an eyebrow, watching the reaction of the others and it's similar to Maria's.

"Who is Alpha Maxwell?"

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Maria stared at her like she grew two extra heads then sighed, "He is the former alpha's brother."

Erin opened her mouth to speak but nothing prepared her for the next words that left Maria's lips.

"He was supposed to be the Alpha King instead of Alpha Derrick."