

Chapter 47

The pack was just as beautiful as I remembered. Maxim and I decided that we'd walk together to see his parents. They didn't live in the pack, per se. From what Maxim had told me, they lived in an old, cute house across a small pond all alone.

When I wanted to know why, Maxim said that they wanted the seclusion, and believe it or not, they sometimes get daily visits from friends and pack members. I thought it was a nice idea to live alone with your mate. It gave you the privacy that you both needed. However, I didn't mind living at the Alpha house. In fact, I enjoy living there.

We have been walking for over thirty minutes. Primal Pack was massive, that was for sure. But I didn't mind. I didn't break a single sweat, and walking with Maxim hand in hand gave me a new feeling of normalcy. I liked this feeling. I really wish it would last forever.

I got a chance to see some more of the pack members too. They all glanced at us weirdly at first until they saw our intertwined hands, and it was like they instantly knew that I was Maxim's mate. They seemed so happy. Some pack members even expressed congratulations and said they couldn't wait for me to be their Luna.

I loved how accepting they were. I couldn't count the number of times I wondered if they'd accept me, even when I was with Lukas. For someone who had been shunned all my life, how could I think that Primal Pack would be any different? But they were, and I was utterly grateful.

Before we knew it, we were at the pond. It wasn't big, but it was beautiful. For a second, I almost felt jealous that Maxim's parents get to have this view every day. It was absolutely marvellous.

The water was clear and almost shimmering under the sunlight. It was littered with water lilies, and dragonflies played about it in numerous colours. The house across was just as beautiful. It wasn't as big as I expected, but it seemed just right for a retired Alpha and Luna.

It was white with grey adorning the columns. Just like any old cottage, there was a brick chimney at the top and a small open porch at the front with a few chairs and a table. The yard space seemed big too, and I could tell that the pack's lands went far beyond what I could see.

For a second, my nerves returned. I was just a few minutes away from meeting Maxim's parents, and I still didn't know how well or how bad this would go. As if feeling my sudden nerves, Maxim gave my hand a short squeeze with a reassuring smile.

"You'll be fine," he mumbled before leaning down to give me a kiss. I returned his smile as best as I could.

We took the narrow trail around the pond towards the house, and before we even got there, the doors were flung open, and a woman, Maxim's mom, I assumed, emerged.

She had the biggest smile that reminded me of Maxim's. Surprisingly, her hair was blonde, so I was left to assume that Maxim and Lukas got their hair colour from their father. However, her hair was littered with a few grey strands and below her eyes had a few wrinkles. Still, she looked nothing less than perfect. In fact, I could see a lot of Lukas in her. He was like the male equivalent of his mother with chiselled cheeks, a stubble and brown hair.

"Maxim!" the woman cheered as she reached out for him. We were at the base of the porch steps when his father emerged.

He was definitely a Dalton. His face was stern, though his eyes were soft. I could see that he was a strong Alpha. He radiated so much power that I almost bowed my head.

"And you must be Melissa," his mother said as she greeted me with two kisses on my cheeks.

I smiled. "It's a pleasure to meet you, Mrs Dalton," I said.

"That's quite an observation you made there," she said as she glanced at her wedding band. Some mates decide to take the extra step and get married. It's more of a human thing since a mate bond is quite all werewolves need. It's stronger than any wedding vows. But it's admirable when mates get married. I've always liked the idea.

"I guess I'm a bit too inquisitive." I laughed awkwardly as my nerves grew. Did I offend her?

"Oh, nonsense!" She waved it off, thankfully. "But you can call me Natoya. It really doesn't matter. And this is my mate, Alexander." She led me up the porch steps toward Maxim's dad.

He smiled gently as he took my hand, and he even surprised me by kissing it. "Nice to meet you, Melissa."

"Likewise," I mumbled through shock. They were all charmers. All of them.

"Well, you three can have a seat. I'll go get the food," Natoya announced, gesturing to the table.

Alexander held my chair out for me, and I mumbled thanks as I sat there. Maxim sat beside me. I noticed that he hadn't greeted his dad, but I didn't want to make too much out of it.

"It's finally great to actually see you in person, Melissa," Alexander said as we all settled. "For the love of me, I couldn't understand why Maxim wouldn't take you by sooner. He wouldn't allow us to come by the Alpha house either, and it has been three weeks since we've heard about this new woman at the Alpha house. And to my knowledge, you've been here longer than that."

I glanced at Maxim nervously. * "Didn't you tell them that I was sick?" * I asked in our mind link.

* "No. Then I'd have to explain how you got sick, which would tarnish the perfect image of Lukas in their minds. I couldn't do that to him nor them," * he replied swiftly.

I nodded to myself as I met Alexander's expectant eyes again.

"I've been... adjusting. I think you might've already known that the circumstances that brought me here weren't the best either. I didn't have the ideal life back home, and then I was just plunged here, so it... it was hard."

Alexander's face fell in what seemed like sympathy as his eyes grew so soft and kind.

"Oh, we didn't know. I'm sorry," he whispered.

"Me too," Maxim added, causing me to glance at him in confusion.

* "Why are you sorry?" * I asked in our link.

He held my hand under the table. * "You really have been through a lot since you came here." *

I smiled at him. * "I'm fine now. You made it all better." *

"Well, if you two are done conversing in your minds, breakfast is ready." This came from

Natoya as she placed the food on the table in front of us. I didn't even notice that she came back.

The food looked and smelled gracious. I didn't realise I was so hungry until the aroma hit my senses.

Maxim shared a plate for me as Natoya initiated small talk.

"So, Maxim. How's your brother? I thought he'd join us," she asked, and Maxim instantly became rigid. The fork fell from his grip to the plate, making a deafening clanking sound. I rubbed his knee under the table as I turned my attention towards his two stunned parents.

"Lukas is fine. He was busy today," I provided instead.

"Hhmm. And tell me, Maxim, you two are still working well together?" his dad asked, placing so much emphasis on his name that it made it abundantly clear that he wanted Maxim to answer and only Maxim.

I gave my mate an apologetic smile as his jaw clenched. I also noticed that this was the first time his dad acknowledged him.

"We're fine, dad. The pack isn't in the ground, is it?" Maxim's tone was a bit harsh, but if you didn't really know him, you wouldn't have realised. However, I, along with his parents, knew him quite well.

"I see that it's not," Alexander mumbled as he placed a fork-full of pancakes in his mouth. "But I have heard of some unnatural border breaches. Aren't you in charge of the border patrol, Marcellus?"

I shivered at the way he called Maxim's name. Maxim hated 'Marcellus'. He told me when I found out that it was his actual name. So, no one referred to him as that except his father, it seemed.

I knew he and his parents didn't have the best relationship. He told me stories about how Lukas was always the favourite, and he was prioritised because he was meant to take over the pack one day. According to both brothers, Maxim didn't do anything wrong. But he was always expected to live up to standards that were sometimes too much for him. I felt awful, and I hated that Alexander was evidently picking on my mate, probably wanting to show him that he wasn't doing a good job, when in fact, he was.

My wolf got defensive, and so did I. "The attacks on the border had nothing to do with Maxim's patrol," I interrupted. "In fact, if you know where I'm from, Maxim's border patrol alone was probably a keen equivalent to the strength of my home pack altogether. There was only one time when the intruders got inside the pack, and that was because most of the wolves were at the barbecue, including the hard-working border patrol. Since then, there have been multiple attempts to breach the border, but they held them off. And when needed, Maxim is always there to assess anything at the borders. Where I'm from, Primal Pack is praised as the strongest pack and has the best border patrol, and it's all due to Maxim," I ended as I popped a strawberry in my mouth.

My tone wasn't dismissive or rude, only informative. I could see Maxim's ghost smile from the corner of my eyes as his father appraised me in slight interest.

"Ah. So you already are a Luna," he observed, and his wife hummed in agreement.

I shrugged innocently as I threw a wink in Maxim's direction and continued my meal. We all ate in silence for a while. I would sometimes catch Alexander's gaze shifting to Maxim as if trying to find something else to bug his son with. However, he would always look at me

then decide against it.

I was happy that I could lessen the torture Maxim had to endure from his dad. His mother evidently loved him, but she wasn't all that chatty either. If she asked questions, they were all directed at me, wanting to know what my pack was like, if I wore contacts and general stuff like hobbies.

She even jumped the ball and went ahead and asked how soon I wanted children. That one had me choking on my orange juice. I've always thought about having a family with my mate. And as Alpha and Luna, children were a solid option to carry on the bloodline. It was an intent from the day I got here. The only reason why Lukas bought me in the first place was to be his surrogate. So, pups have always been in the picture.

But with everything going on right now, it was a definite no-no.

"Probably in a few years," I had told her, and her frown was evident. "Like two years," I added in hopes to soothe her disapproval, but that only seemed to make it worse.

Luckily, Maxim saved me and told her that children would come when the time was right. But in Natoya's mind, the right time was now.

So, all in all, the breakfast was quite... interesting. There were nice parts about it, some awkward and some downright uncomfortable.

It seemed like hours had passed when Natoya finally got up to clear the table, leaving just the three of us again.

With no food to feed the silence, it was now simply uncomfortable.

I drummed my fingers against my thigh as I kept my gaze down. As far as meeting the parents is concerned, it went well. They seemed to like and approve of me, and that's all I wanted. On the other hand, Maxim didn't seem to have a strong relationship with them, so I wouldn't push for one either. All they need to know is that I exist and I'm their son's Luna.

"Um, Melissa, why don't you go help Natoya in the kitchen?" Alexander asked. But the way he asked suggested that he was telling me to go.

I gulped as I glanced at Maxim.

"Go," he said reassuringly. I knew this couldn't be good. Why would his father want to be alone with him if not to torture him?

"You sure?" I asked, and he nodded as he kissed my cheek.

"Yeah."

Sighing, I dragged myself from the porch and entered the house. I hope all hell doesn't break loose when I'm gone.



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