

Trio of Mates Chapter 46 - Chapter 45

Chapter 46: Chapter 45 - Charlie/Zak

Charlie:

I wake on Friday morning, a sense of excitement and happiness flooding my body. Today is the day. Brandon will find out that he is our mate. Last night, he had linked Zak around 10:30 to say that he was still with his father and that he wouldn't be coming to see us, but that he would see us this morning.

Though I was somewhat disappointed, I knew that it wouldn't be for more than one night. Brandon would be with from his birthday on.

Now that it is the morning of his birthday, I am excited, but a bit nervous, too. What will happen? How will the pack react? How will Brandon react?

Only one way to find out. I hurriedly jump into the shower. As I come back out to get dressed, Zak meets me at the bathroom door.

"How are you feeling?" he asks.

"Nervous. Excited. Nauseous. Impatient. You?"

Zak:

"Same" I reply to Charlie. Looking at the bedside clock, I see the time. I turn back to Charlie, laughing. "You really are impatient if you got up before 6:30."

"Shut up!" she says, smacking my arm.

I pull her into a hug, kissing her matemark. "Our mate will come home with us tonight. He will be ours."

Her arms wrap around me, holding me tight. I can feel her body vibrate with anticipation. "Hurry up." She kisses me quickly before pulling away. "Get ready. I want to go see our mate."

I smack her ass before going into the bathroom. I hear her giggle before shutting the door.

While showering, all I can think about is Brandon. I want him. I want him now. But, I know we've gotta go slow. He won't like that he's being blindsided by this. Brandon has always had difficulties with the fact that he doesn't know who his mate is and that it would just sneak up on him. He likes to be in control, as evidenced by how he acts in the bedroom.

Getting out of the shower, I open the door and call to Charlie. "Babe, do you think that we should meet with Brandon together or separately?"

Her brows furrow. "I honestly hadn't thought of it. Why? What do you think?"

"I think that we need to at least give him a minute with just one of us. This is going to be really overwhelming for all of us, but especially for him."

I can tell that she doesn't like it, but she nods. "Ok. What if I sit at the high table in the dining hall and you wait in the kitchen? I'll link you as soon as he comes in. You walk in and...we'll get our mate."

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Chapter 47: Chapter 46 - Brandon

I can barely sleep. After everything that my father told me, everything that he wants me to do, my mind is spinning. At 6:30, I shove the blankets off me, tired of trying. I spend an inordinate amount of time in the shower, trying to relax. Today is supposed to be exciting. One of the best days of my life. I will take over my position as Beta! I will likely find my mate! It's my birthday! I mean, if the prospect of cake can't even cheer me up, I know I'm a goner. But all that swirls in my gut is dread. Dad was right. My mate is likely going to be a male. And I'll have to turn him away.

I always knew that my parents were great friends. But there was never that spark between them that I saw in all of my friends' parents. There were no little touches of affection. No gleam in their eyes when they saw each other. They were mated, but they weren't in love. Could I really live my life like that?

I had decided to be with Charlie and Zak before I found my mate in the hope that the stories were true. Once you found your mate, you would forget about everyone else. That my love for them would dim to just a friendship once I found my Goddess given love. But knowing that they think that we are a trio. Knowing that I will have to remember what we are to each other, even though I can never act on it once I have chosen a mate. How? How can I do it?

Finding no answers, I turn off the shower and proceed to dress. The feeling of despair only gets heavier in my heart.

As I make my way to the dining hall, I scent the most intoxicating smell. Rosemary and rain mixed with maple and moss. The scents are one, yet separate. It's unlike anything I've ever smelt, but familiar in a way. My wolf paces in the back of my mind, restless and excited. I don't think, I just move. Running towards the dining hall I throw open the doors and take a deep inhale.

My eyes move to the high table. There she sits, her raven-dark hair spilling over her left shoulder, her gray eyes seeming to glow in the early morning light. She wears a simple yellow summer dress, the hue setting off her olive skin.

She springs from the table, coming to stand in front of me. Charlie. "Mate." Even though she whispers it, I can clearly hear her in the silent dining room.

"Mate." My voice is full of wonder as I pull her into my arms. The fated sparks dance along my skin and I nearly moan at the feeling. I kiss her, her arms immediately going around my neck. I place my nose in her hair, scenting her. But something is wrong. Something is missing. She has the rosemary and rain scent, but where is the maple and moss?

Suddenly, the doors from the kitchen open and Zak walks in. His scent hits my nose as he walks closer. There. The other part of the scent.

His deep brown eyes connect with mine and I feel something perfect click into place. His face lights up with a smile as he hurriedly makes his way towards us.

He reaches his hand to my cheek and, again, the fated sparks cover where he touches.

"Mate." His eyes shine with joy as he stares at me.

"Mate." I breathe out.

Encircling Charlie in our embrace, Zak kisses me. When we pull away from each other, I just stare at them. My heart is overflowing with happiness as I realize that I don't have to say goodbye to them when I find another mate. They are both mine.

Wait, both?

It is only as that thought crosses my mind that I realize that the dining room is nearly full with our pack, the high table completely full with our families. The room, which is usually welcoming and full of the sounds of chatter and playful banter is completely silent. Our entire pack stares at us, shock, fear, and, occasionally, disgust evident on their faces.

Of course, they know nothing of the mate trios. Hell, I didn't know anything about them until yesterday and I kind of brushed it off. It's weird as hell, but it didn't concern me, right? Only, it obviously does. My father is part of a trio. And now, so am I.

Oh, fuck.

I step out of Charlie and Zak's arms. The pain is evident on their faces as they see the fear that settles on my face. I immediately want to go back to them. To comfort them. But I don't. I whole-heartedly believe what I said to my father last night. This will only cause more pain. More death. The rest of the packs will turn away from us. Isn't that why the Diana pack has hidden all this time? They knew that all wolfdom would take them out, root and stem. I can't do that to my pack. I can't do that to Zak and Charlie. Accepting them as my mates would mean their death sentence.

"Pack, please clear out to give us time to - " Former-Alpha Jared says, standing at the high table.

"No need, Former-Alpha." I interrupt, unable to take my eyes from my two mates. Tears that I didn't know were in my eyes begin to drip from my cheeks. I know what I have to do.

"Brandon..." Charlie's voice is full of worry.

"What are you doing?" Zak asks. He starts to walk toward me, but I hold out a hand to stop him.

"I, Brandon Conall Snow, reject - "

"NO!!" Charlie screams, lunging for me.

Zak follows her, both grabbing at me. Their hands grasp at my arms, my shoulders, my face.

"Please, Brandon! Please think about what you are doing!" Zak cries into my face. Tears stream down their faces.

"I have to," I plead with them. "I have to protect us." Taking a deep breath, I start again. "I, Brandon Conall Snow, Beta of the Artemis Pack, reject you, Charlotte Elektra Loup, Luna of the Artemis Pack, and you, Zakary Alexander Loup, Alpha of the Artemis Pack, as my mates."

Instantly, we all fall to our knees, clutching our chests.

Trio of Mates Chapter 48 - Chapter 47

Chapter 48: Chapter 47 - Charlie/Zak

Charlie:

The pain is excruciating. I can barely breathe through it. It feels as if my soul is being ripped completely out of my chest. The pain is doubled from the echo of it through my matebond with Zak. I try to scream but can't. I barely feel the ground as my body falls. I can't even catch myself. I land on my knees and crumple to my side.

Mom and Dad run to my side, screaming at me to breathe. But I don't want to. I just want to die.

The only thing keeping me tied to this world is Zak. I have to make sure that he's ok. I can feel his despair and pain through the bond. I have to make sure that he is safe.

Suddenly, my throat opens and air sears through my lungs.

Zak:

It's as if a hot poker has been pushed into my heart. The pain blazes through me, seeming to stop my entire body from functioning. I collapse to the ground, unable to withstand my pain and the echoing pain from Charlie. My body is on fire as part of my soul is ripped from me. I can't think. I can't speak. I can't breathe. All I can do is feel. Feel the rejection of the one man I have ever been in love with.

My wolf howls in my head, screaming his agony and loneliness. Our mate rejected us.

Charlie!

I have to make sure that she is ok. I force myself to my knees. I look around my parents who are gathered around me and see her. Charlie's head is in her mother's lap and she is gasping for air, her parents by her side. Her father gives me a nod when he sees me looking. She's ok.

Suddenly the doors to the dining room slam shut. I turn to see that Brandon is gone, his father kneeling where he had fallen and staring at the door that I assume he left through.

Devin gets up from the floor beside Brandon's dad and chases after Brandon. He calls over his shoulder, "I'll go talk to him."

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Chapter 49: Chapter 48 - Devin

What. The. Hell? I thought that Brandon would be ecstatic that he not only had one, but both of the people that he is in love with as his mates. The Goddess pretty much guaranteed that if we didn't tell him about the trio beforehand, then he would accept them. Xander and I even came to breakfast this morning specifically to see it happen.

This wasn't supposed to happen!

I follow Brandon's heavy running out of the packhouse. He's nearly to the treeline when I catch up with him.

I grab his shoulder and spin him around to face me. "You fucking idiot!" I scream. "What the hell was that?"

But when I see his face, I back off. Tears pour from his eyes. His face is red and blotchy and sobs wrack his frame.

Seeing it's me, he wraps his arms around me and I just hold him.

"I had to Dev," he says through the great heaving sobs. His sentences are incomplete, his words difficult to understand. I manage to make out "I had to..good of the pack...annihilate us...couldn't risk...Dad and your parents..."

Each word comes out in a rush. His breathing is harsh, ragged, and fast.

Rubbing his back, I interrupt him. "Ok, man. It's ok. Calm down! You're gonna hyperventilate. Come on. Let's sit down."

I lead him to one of the benches that edge the treeline and we sit. He continues to cry, his head leaning on my shoulder. I try to comfort him as best as I can, rubbing his back, making shushing sounds.

Did you find him? Xander links.

Yeah. We're out by the treeline at the front of the packhouse.

What happened? Did he tell you why?

I can't really understand what he's saying. He's crying too hard. Something about it being for the good of the pack.

Shit...

You can say that again. Brandon's sobs have started to subside, but he still hasn't said anything. As I wait, I continue to link Xander. How are Charlie and Z?

Inconsolable. They won't let each other go. We've put them to bed and their mothers are with them. Carl, the former leaders, and I are trying to do damage control with the pack.

What a shit show. I rub my face with my hand before placing my head on top of Brandon's. He takes a great, shuddering breath. Then the sobs stop. He's calmed down. Let me see if he'll talk to me. I love you.

I love you. And, Dev...thanks.

For what?

For not rejecting me...for the good of the pack.

I couldn't, Xander. I need you. I love you. I have since the first time I laid eyes on you.

I love you, too, Dev. More than anything.

I smile and cut the link.

My facial expression quickly changes when I hear and feel Brandon take another deep, shuddering breath. He's not crying anymore, but his breathing still hitches and he hasn't moved to dry his face.

I give him a quick squeeze before speaking. "Ready to talk now?"

He hangs his head and shrugs his shoulders. I almost want to giggle. This is the way that he would react as a kid when he had a huge crying fit. But I wouldn't get anything if I laughed at him now, so I manage to keep it in.

"Come on, Bray. What's going on?"

He huffs a short laugh. "You haven't called me that since fifth grade."

I smile into his hair. "It seemed like you needed something comforting. Don't change the subject. Why did you reject Zach and Charlie? You've been in love with them for years."

He takes another deep breath. I'm afraid that he's going to start crying again. Instead he sits up, leaning against the back of the bench. He pulls off his shirt, using it to wipe his face. "I had to. The pack needs stability right now. We're on the brink of war, even if the other side doesn't know it yet. We don't need to give our allies a reason not to remain on our side."

"So, you're saying that you rejected the only two people that you've actually been in love with, the two people that our Mother made for you, because you think we would lose some allies?"

He nods his head, not looking at me.

"Brandon, I say this with all compassion and love, you're a fucking dumbass."

He lets out a humorless laugh. "I sure feel like it right now."

"Didn't you hear what Lucille said yesterday? This mating is Goddess ordained. She specifically chose both Charlie and Zak for you. There are even other trios out there. Look at the Diana pack. There's gotta be more-"

"Didn't you hear what she said about the trios being hunted down and killed?" He looks at me, his face twisted in pain. "We would never be safe. The entire pack would be killed, enslaved, or left for rogue if we were defeated. What if our allies scatter once they hear about it? Who would help us? One fucking pack? It's not enough, Dev! I can't..." His voice has steadily risen in volume as he spoke, but his voice breaks here. Tears fall freely from his eyes again, his chest heaving. When he's able to speak again, his voice is nearly a whisper. "If I accepted them, it would be like signing their death warrant. I can't...I can't do that. I love them too much." Brandon folds forward, his face buried in his hands.

Well, shit. What do you say to that?

I lean down and scoop him into my arms, allowing him to cry on my shoulder again. I try to come up with soothing words, but there are none. He did this for his love of them. Just as I was willing to give up my position for the love of my mate, he is willing to give up the bond with Charlie and Zak for love of them.

Trio of Mates Chapter 50 - Chapter 49

Chapter 50: Chapter 49 - Charlie/Zak

Charlie:

Though the physical pain has dissipated, my heart aches. Tears don't stop leaking from my eyes and my throat is raw from my screams. Not even Zak's arms around me, his front pressed into my back, his chin on my head can reduce the pain. We've been laying like this for hours. Our mothers keep attempting to coax us to eat or drink, but we refuse everything. We don't talk. We don't move.

I've cut off my mind link with everyone. I keep repeating all of our moments with Brandon over the last week, since the morning that Lucille told us that he was our mate. Every touch. Every kiss. Every "I love you." The intense joy that I felt when he claimed me as his mate. Claimed Zak. The look on his face as he backed away from us. And his words. They repeat over and over in my head.

"I, Brandon Conall Snow, Beta of the Artemis Pack, reject you, Charlotte Elektra Loup, Luna of the Artemis Pack, and you, Zakary Alexander Loup, Alpha of the Artemis Pack, as my mates."

"I, Brandon...reject you, Charlotte...and you, Zakary...as my mates."

"I, Brandon...reject you, Charlotte..."

"I...reject you..."

Zak:

So much pain.

Unending,

Wrenching,

Excruciating,

Inexhaustible,

Deep,

Aching,

Protracted,

Throbbing,

Crushing,

Bottomless agony.