

Chapter 21 - Alpha Alexander and Omega Scarlett Novel by IS Barbosa

Scarlett:

I raised myself to look at Alexander as I realized that I was asleep on his chest.

His right arm was wrapped around me, despite it being loose, his face relaxed, and his heartbeat steady. I couldn't help the small smile that formed on my lips before I blushed, realizing that this was the first time I've slept in a man's bed in my life.

The night Alexander took my virginity, he walked out of my house as if it was nothing, leaving to sob all night long. Therefore, to wake up in his arms now just felt surreal. My wolf, who has been broken since the rejection, grew confused at his attitude. She had blocked me during the time being alone, and during the pregnancy, only ensuring to keep me strong to ensure that I didn't lose Anastasia while pregnant.

I slowly got up from Alexander's arms, careful not to wake him up, before I walked toward Nasia's crib to find her awake, staring up at me. Her eyes met mine and I couldn't help but smile as I lifted her in my arms. She cooed, and I kissed her cheek before hearing Alexander's breathing unevenly.

I could hear him getting out of bed before taking a step to stand behind me. He put a hand on my shoulder, making my heart skip a beat "did she wake you?"

His voice was deep with sleep, and gently squeezing my shoulder, I couldn't help but feel like old times when I would sometimes be distracted by something and he would either put his hand on my shoulder or wrap his arms around me from the back. Our attitude was one of the main reasons why everyone thought that we were a couple.

"No, she was staring at the ceiling when I woke up. I was actually surprised to see that she was awake without making a sound, usually she would whimper or coo" I said, smiling when he put his hand on her belly, gently rubbing it.

"I believe that she felt somewhat safe with both her parents by her side. You know, as a wolf, she's catching our scents, and knowing that we were both

beside her gave her a sense of contentment, somehow” Alexander said and I nodded in agreement. Alexander removed his hand from my shoulder, and turning around to face him, I smiled when he looked down at her, then at me, silently asking me whether or not he could carry her. I nodded and handed her to him, smiling when Anastasia hummed before taking her father’s finger in her hand.

“I’ll freshen up and come and take her to feed her, can you please hold her for a bit?” I asked, looking down at his chest, avoiding his eyes in fear of an out lash that I didn’t want to deal with, The man and I were barely making sense into actually talking to one another and the LAST thing I needed was for him to suddenly be angry with me.

“Sure, then I was thinking that the two of us can go and have breakfast together? You know, outside the house for a change” he said, and I frowned, looking up at him to process whether or not I heard him right.

“What about Nasia?” I asked, looking down at our daughter, making him smile. The fact that he was inviting me out for breakfast was overwhelming enough, and judging by the fact that the two of us were still walking on murky waters, I knew that I shouldn’t be all too confident about this.

I am sure that mom wouldn’t mind taking her for a few hours. Plus, I need to make up the fact that the two of us were supposed to be getting things...”

You and I already talked about this, Alexander, and we don’t need to keep bringing it up. Yes, I am not going to tell you that it has all gone forgotten, not in that sense yet; but at least the two of us managed to finally have a proper conversation as two adults” I said, stopping him. I looked at Anastasia who kept looking between Alexander and I, listening to our voices. I smiled and stood on my toes to kiss her cheek before looking at Alex who was watching me “I’ll go and freshen up then get ready. We can drop Nasia to your mum’s house when we’re on the way, how about it?”

“Sounds like a plan” Alexander said, smiling at me I smiled and nodded before taking a step back, heading to my room as I processed what just happened as my heart raced, my wolf anticipating more than she should at the moment; however, I couldn’t blame her, even I was losing my normal cautious side.

Did he just ask me out on a date?

"Where are we going?" I asked, crossing my arms over my chest as the two of us walked out of the car. Alexander parked the car at a park, and heading toward the car's trunk, he opened it and pulled out a picnic basket making my eyes widen in surprise.

"We are going to have a picnic like we used to when we were kids" he said, making my cheeks redden as my heart skipped a beat. The man who was yelling at me for weeks now was actually taking me to the park for a picnic?

"You're being serious?" I asked and he smiled, turning to face me.

"Yes, I am. I used to remember how much you enjoyed it when we did go to picnics, and I figured that after everything that you've taken for me, I might as well make it up to you. Plus, I think that since we came clean on everything yesterday, we might as well be able to try and make things right between us" he said, looking me in the eye. My wolf shied back, whimpering before I could stop her, making Alexander frown in confusion.

"I am sorry, my wolf isn't believing that this is true after..."

"I can't blame her" he said, stopping me, giving me a weak smile "believe it or not, my wolf felt the same pain the night I rejected you, and the fact that you accepted the rejection so easily only made this harder on me; however, I understood last night that you had your reasons to that"

"As I said, Alex, I wanted, and still want you to be happy. I know that I may sound foolish to some, but your happiness, as my Alpha, mattered more than mine mattered to me. Yes, it is ridiculous, and yes, I should have known that the rejection was coming since you had Delilah..."

"I no longer have Delilah in my life, Scarlett" he said, stopping me "I know that you might doubt my word now, and I can't blame you for it; but I made my choice last night"

"Your choice?" I asked, frowning in confusion.

"Whether or not the two of us decide to be together. I cannot be with Delilah" Alexander said, making me frown in confusion "maybe things would change in the future, and maybe I would change my mind too; however, for now, if I want to ensure my daughter's safety, I can't be with a woman who I know would see her as a threat instead of a child"

“Why would she see her as a threat? I’m sorry for asking, and if I sound stupid with my question, but what could my daughter do to harm her?” I asked, shaking my head in confusion, trying to process his words

“It is not Nasia that is the threat, Scarlett” he said, guiding me toward one of the trees “you are”

“Me?” My heart raced against my ribcage as I tried to follow up to what he was saying. The fact that he was being honest with me was something that I was grateful for, I couldn’t deny that; however, I couldn’t help but worry about what he meant and what he was talking about to begin with.

“Yes, and Anastasia would always be the reminder of that threat” he said, answering my question “and for that, I would rather I choose to stay away from her than have her...”

Alexander:

“Are you going to announce the fact that we’re mates?” Scarlett asked, taking me off guard. I frowned at her question, not really understanding the reason behind it, and looking down at her lap, she seemed to shy back.

“I don’t see the reason to do so considering that we’re not a couple, nor have I marked you. However, I am very curious to know why you asked” I said, raising an eyebrow.

“Don’t you think that people would wonder about the reason for me being pregnant and not Delilah. You know, as far as everyone knew, the two of you were the power duo” she said, making my chest ache. It was true, despite knowing that if I wanted my daughter’s safety, I couldn’t be with Delilah, not for now at least, but that didn’t mean that my love for my woman wasn’t true. Hell, the pain I felt with her not being around was one that I couldn’t describe, and being forced to live with Scarlett, I knew that I could at least try to mend the scars formed; however, the woman kept bringing her up every few hours, and that fact didn’t help.

“I believe that my relationship with Delilah did not concern you or anyone around. Now, you have two options, either you start minding your limits, on your own terms, and know that you should never question your Alpha, or I force you to mind them” I said coldly. Her eyes studied my expression for a second before she sighed.

“Why do you hate me so much?” She asked, frowning in confusion “what did I ever do to you that makes you doubt me so much?”

“I don’t doubt you and to hate you would mean that you mean something to me. I hate to break it to you, but you don’t” I said, glaring at her. She shook her head in response, making me frown.

“For a person who says that I mean nothing to them, you are arranging a picnic, with the food that I like, and under a big oak tree like we used to plan as kids. The anger that you feel towards me, and the sudden hate, neither one of them could be for ‘no reason’, and to prove it to you...”

“What do you mean to prove it to me?” I asked, stopping her, frowning in confusion.

“When Anastasia is old enough to sit on her own, I would know that her muscles have strengthened a bit, be more open into looking for a relationship. I used to deprive myself of that, for my own personal reasons, I never saw it as important; however, I believe that searching for a relationship wouldn’t harm me now, and considering that you don’t really care about me...”

“You are the mother of my child...”

“That does not make me your slave, Alexander” she said, stopping me “as long as the two of us have made the choice to stay together, co-parent; however, live like friends. I am aware that you telling me that you want nothing with Delilah is only temporary, and if not Delilah, another woman. I don’t know why, but you seem to resent me with each passing second; therefore, I don’t mind finding someone who would actually look at me...”

“You are not going to find anyone” I said, stopping her.

“So, in your opinion, I am going to stay single for life? Don’t you think that it is unfair for me?” She asked, shaking her head at me “don’t I have the right to at least have someone to love and cherish me’?”

“If you are willing to be in a relationship, then you are not going to see my daughter...”

“That is not up to you to decide” she said, her tone colder than ever “I believe that you are aware of nature’s rules and laws. A baby always goes to her mum, and...”

"If the mother is capable of handling the child. As far as I saw, and even showed you, as a pregnant woman, you couldn't handle feeding yourself, how the fuck are you going to manage handling, raising, educating, and feeding your child? I am literally only speaking basics" I asked, glaring at her "I didn't even mention her getting sick, her needing to get her vaccines..."

"Believe it or not, if a mother wants to do something for her kid, she would. Whether or not you like it, I will fight for my daughter, and I believe that you know me enough to know that I would not submit to your stupidity. Anyhow, considering that you do not wish to announce us as mates..."

"If you think that you're twisting my hand by behaving the way that you are; you are very wrong. Believe me, the LAST thing you want to do is mess with me, Scarlett" I said, giving her my final warning before laying down on the blanket. Scarlett didn't say a word after that and instead, she chose to turn around and look at the sky, probably knowing that she failed at getting what she wanted.

Her heart raced, and despite that, I didn't bother looking at her to see what she was doing, already knowing that she would be scrolling through her phone; however, it wasn't until I heard her calling someone that I sat up, frowning in confusion.

"Dylan, hey..." she said, her voice somewhat broken. I looked at her to find her eyes bloodshot red despite no tears falling from them. The smile that was on her face when the two of us woke up completely faded, and before I knew it, it was replaced with a frown that not only made my wolf whimper, but also made my chest ache.

"I am fine, but I need a small favor" "Sure, what's wrong?"

"Can you please pick me up? I was at the park and I really don't want to take a cab back home If you could..."

"Sure, just send me your location, I'll be right over" he said, stopping her as she got up.

"Thank you" she said, her voice breaking slightly before she cleared her throat, fiddling through her phone as she sent him our location "alright, I sent it"

"Got it" he said "I'll be there in fifteen minutes" "Okay, thank you"

“You’re welcome, love”

They both hung up before she looked down at me. Her eyes were filled with hate, and wrapping her arms around herself she kneeled down to get her bag before looking at me “I believe that you can call your ex to enjoy the night with you. I won’t be coming back to the pack this evening”

“Where the fuck are you going?”

“Does it concern you?” She asked, glaring daggers at me “I told you not to threaten me with my daughter, and it is getting on my fucking nerve that you keep insulting me for the fact that I am not as ‘financially’ capable or stable as you are. Fine, have your mate come over, and if you don’t come searching for me forty-eight hours later, if not less, wanting me back, then consider me gone for good”

“Be careful what you’re wishing for, Scarlett” I said, glaring at her.

“I believe that it is YOU who should be careful this time, Alexander” she said, shaking her head at me “the thing is, whether you like it or not, I am Anastasia’s daughter, and not anyone else. If you believe that another woman would be willing to handle my child, be my guest. I am done trying to satisfy you, even if it means ripping my own heart out in the process”

“Scarlett...”

Her phone rang, breaking our conversation, making my heart drop. I looked at her, studying her expression for a second before she got up “you made all the choices so far; therefore, I believe this time, it is time for ME to make mine”

“You are abandoning your daughter...”

“No, I am not” she said, stopping me “God knows how much this is breaking my soul; however, I do not want my daughter to see her mother growing up weak, frightened, insecure, or anxious, therefore, if losing her means that I would not be that bad influence on her, I would do that...”

“Scarlett, stop acting like...”

“Goodbye, Alexander”

Scarlett:

“Are you sure that you don’t want me coming in with you, Scarlett? You look exhausted as hell...”

“There’s no need for that, Dylan. thank you” I said politely. In truth, I didn’t have a place to stay. After closing my contract with this building, I knew that I couldn’t just open it. Plus, I didn’t even have money to pay for it; however, I didn’t want him to know that.

“Alright, just give me a call if you need anything, yeah?”

“Thank you” I said politely before getting out of the car. I watched as he drove before getting inside the building and sitting on the stairs. I knew that I would end up getting kicked out; however, that was the last thing I cared about. I had things to worry about, and therefore, that was the least of my concerns.

I knew that I needed a job to support myself, and if I ever decided to want to see my daughter,

somehow, even take her, I need to have legal proof that I could take care of her. However, living broken under Alexander’s shadow was not something that I wanted her to know about me. It wasn’t how I wanted her to see her mum, I refused it.

“What are you doing here, Scarlett?” The building’s landlord asked, looking down at me. He knew that me leaving on short notice was breaching my contract, but with Alexander’s terms, I knew that I could do nothing about it.

“I just needed a place to sit, my apologies” I said, getting up before he could kick me out. His eyes glared daggers at me, and taking a step forward, he grabbed me by my neck, wanting to choke me, making my eyes widen in surprise.

“I hope that you are aware of what you’ve cost me when you left unannounced” he stated coldly, his breath which smelled like liquor hitting my face as he leaned in “and I believe that I know how you could pay back for it”

“Don’t touch me” I said, putting my hand on his wrist, wanting to push him away. I knew not to tighten my grip too much as not to reveal myself as a wolf; however, I also knew that the last thing I wanted was to be taken advantage of.

“Why? It would be the least that you could do after that stupid stunt you pulled” he said, loosening his grip around my neck as he lowered his hand down my waist. I let out a low growl of warning, no longer caring about him finding out about me being a wolf before pushing him back, forcing him to let my hand go. His eyes widened in surprise, and took a step back, as he processed what just happened.

However, I punched him in the face and ran out of the building as fast as I could, making sure that he couldn't reach me, and knowing that he wouldn't dare follow me anyway, not after he now knew that I could kill him in a blink, I knew that I shouldn't be too worried; however, I still chose not to look back to see whether or not he was following. I would have rather kept my sprint.

My heart raced, and it was a while before I stopped to catch my breath. I sat on the floor of an empty pavement, knowing that I really had nowhere to go at this point. My chest ached as I felt both empty and alone, and it was times like this when I wished that my parents didn't choose to save the Alpha and his mum. They could have saved themselves and me, and I would have at least had a family; however, for as long as I could remember, despite being raised by the pack's Alpha and Luna, I have been secluded, living alone in my empty house, only being invited over for meals.

For some, it would have been more comfortable; however, to me, I just felt like I was breaking inside.

The walls reminded me of the fact that I had no one but the walls that surrounded it, and even when I did come of age, wishing that I would find myself a mate, someone who might at least look at me differently, someone to welcome me as part of his family; however, I should have known that I wasn't lucky enough for that.

Whereas any other girl would have been her happiest being the Alpha's mate, I was the most frightened. The Alpha, my mate, the man who was supposed to be my world, and I his, hated me, had another lover, and saw me as the omega that he never wanted to consider.

His mating bond not only cost me my virginity, something that kept me somewhat pure, it also cost me my pride and dignity. Having been rejected, I couldn't even look at anyone in the pack for days, and after finding out that I was pregnant, I couldn't even look at myself in the mirror.

Now, I even lost the one person who I thought might be my blessing.

My daughter.

Who was I kidding? Why would Alexander come and look for me when he could have the woman of his dreams by his side? I just gave them a clear field, and regardless of the consequences, I knew that she would do her best to ensure that she didn't lose him, and in the end, I was the one who lost.

"Why?" I asked, breaking my silence "why do I have to live through all that? Why can't I be like everyone else? Why can't I just look at something and have it?"

My chest ached, and pulling on the roots of my hair, I found myself screaming before I could stop myself, my heart feeling like it was ripped out of my chest.

"When is all of this going to end? When would it be my turn to truly smile without fearing being judged, misunderstood, or spoken of?" I asked, again, wiping my tears as I stared at the sky "just when?"

Alexander:

"So, who the fuck did you think you were to abuse my woman?" I asked, glaring at the landlord whose eyes were wide in fear as he pissed his pants "and not only that, you actually thought that you would get away with it?"

The bastard tried to follow her; however, thankful for the fact that she didn't catch my scent, I stopped the man before he could move a step toward her. I held him to the wall that he had her pinned against while Mason, one of my men, went to follow her to ensure that nothing happened to her.

"Do you think that anyone would notice you dying right now? Should I choose to throw your body where no one could find it, or even worse, have a bunch of dogs eat your flesh, do you really believe that anyone would care?" I asked, baring my canines as I glared at the man whose heart raced as his hands shook, processing what I was saying.

"Please don't" he begged, shaking his head at me, his hands shaking as he tried putting it on my wrist to stop me from choking him. I raised an amused eyebrow, but waited for whatever explanation or excuse he wanted to give. I knew that he had none, and even if he did, nothing would redeem the fact that he was trying to take advantage of MY woman.

“But I am very tempted to do so” I said, shrugging my shoulders. He shook his head again, and banging his head against the wall behind him, I watched as he slid down the wall, sitting on the floor as he held it. I knew that the slam wasn’t hard enough to kill or hurt him, much; however, I also knew that it was going to be teaching him a lesson about touching another woman against her will.

I got on my knee in front of him, watching as he tried backing away to run from me, making me chuckle before I gripped him by his chin, my fingers digging on his skin, making him whimper in both pain and fear. His eyes were fixed on mine for a second, and shaking his head, I could tell that he wanted me to stop.

“If I ever see you a hundred feet close to my woman, you are going to be dead, and I don’t care if she enters this building. You get the fuck out and leave while she stays, do you understand me?” I asked, glaring at the man.

“Y-Yes, sir” he said and I nodded before letting him go and getting up. I walked out of the building, catching sight of Carter who was waiting for me across the street with his phone in his ear as he probably spoke to Mason.

“Mason is asking whether to approach her or not? She fell asleep in front of a tree...”

“No, if she wishes to stay alone, then she can. She would eventually stop being stubborn when she sees that she has no money, a roof over her head, and is away from her daughter. The Scarlett that I knew is not as cold hearted as to be able to simply let go of her baby; therefore, I believe that she should back by midnight, if not, tomorrow morning”

“What the f*ck do you mean by you lost her?” I asked, glaring at Mason as he entered my house with shaky hands. He looked down at the ground, avoiding my eyes as he waited for me to gut him alive.

“She just left. I don’t know what or how it did, but one minute she entered the bathroom, it was a public one, and the next, she was just gone Hell, I even entered the bathroom to check on where she might have gone, but her clothes were thrown in the trash, and she was suddenly nowhere to be seen” Mason said, and I frowned, cursing under my breath. The woman realized that she was being followed. Hell, of course, she would. Catching Mason’s scent was only a matter of time; however, I didn’t expect her to catch it as easily. But then again, I didn’t expect her to stay away from the house for that long either.

Anastasia, who was inside the room, cried, her cries tearing through the walls of the house as she searched for her mom. She has been refusing all bottled milk, and I even tried to get her one of the other pack's mothers. The woman just gave birth, and tried to breastfeed her; however, my beloved daughter was being as stubborn as her mother was. I already knew that she was going to be as hard as Scarlett was, but then again, Scarlett was never known to be stubborn, not unless annoyed or angered.

"Have you tried tracing her phone...?"

Mason pulled out her phone, and I let out a low growl of annoyance. She couldn't have thought of everything so easily, could she? I didn't even know where she would be staying. The woman has been spending the night in different areas every day for a week now, therefore, I didn't know where she was going to be staying this time, whether anyone would be hurting her, or whether or not she had anything to even eat or drink.

I ran my fingers through my hair as I tried to think straight, one hint, just one on where she might be going would be enough. It would help lead me to her, but I knew at this point, if she didn't want to be found, she wouldn't be.

She was doing this on purpose, and I knew that it was to prove a point to me. Fucking hell, was she doing a good job at it. Anastasia hasn't been resting for days now, and despite her young age, seeing as her mom wasn't around, she was starting to deprive herself of food.

"Send a search party to find her, I don't care what you have to do, I want her back in the house before tonight" I said, taking a step back to enter my daughter's room. I stood against the door frame, watching as the nurses tried calming her down a bit. Her heart raced, and her cries grew louder, making my chest ache. Mom sat on the edge of the bed, watching her with pain in her eyes. She looked at me, and sitting beside her, I wrapped my arm around her shoulder as I pulled her to my chest.

"What are we going to do, Alex? The little girl is going to end up losing her life if this proceeds" Mom asked, looking at Anastasia whose sobs grew louder as if in pain.

"We're going to find her mom, one way or the other, I will bring Scarlett back" I said, kissing her temple.

“What happened that drove her to leave?” She asked, not caring that there were nurses in the room. I looked down at my lap, avoiding her eyes for a second before sighing and getting up. I couldn’t even tell her that it was ME and my attitude that drove her to choosing this. I have pressured her so much that she was more than willing to live on the street, working for an hour’s pay cleaning dishes, or washing toilets to get something to eat, before she hit the road again, instead of coming home to the pack.

“Alexander, a mother would not just leave her baby” mom said again, insisting on the topic. I knew that for fact, and especially not one like Scarlett, someone who truly did fight to keep her daughter alive inside her even in the worst of conditions.

“I will be in my office if you need anything, mom” I said, not bothering to answer her “the men are searching, and I’ll try my best to find her from my side. Rest assured that I wouldn’t allow my daughter to get hurt if it cost my life for it”

I walked out of the room before she could say a word, and looking down at my feet, I leaned against the wall for a second and I took a deep breath My daughter’s cries broke my heart with each passing second.

I pulled my phone out of my pocket, knowing that the fastest way to get things done sometimes was to ask for help, and despite riot usually liking that as a method, I knew that it was the best option.

I walked toward my office as I dialed the man’s number He answered the phone two minutes later, his voice all too familiar, content, arid calm, as he always was.

“To what do I owe the honor, Alpha Alexander?” He asked, not bothering to sugarcoat things, knowing that if I was calling, then it was for business to be taken care of.

“My mate has gone missing, and I need your help, Volkov”

Scarlett:

I walked until my feet stopped carrying me.

It wasn't until I was sure that Mason was no longer following me, and had practically lost track of me, that I stopped and took a seat in front of one of the lakes.

My hands shook as I grabbed a piece of bread that I bought after a few hours of cleaning the dishes, toilets, and tables at one of the restaurants. It wasn't the ideal job, but at least, I knew that I wasn't depending on anyone to come and lash out on me whenever I spoke.

I took a bite off the bread, and despite it being dry, I was thankful for food that entered my system.

My head throbbed as I knew that I needed to rest, having been working since early morning, it was now a while past noon, and I knew that I had to hit the road after nightfall to ensure that I didn't get hurt by any of the drunk, high, or drugged men that could come here later tonight.

I was yet to find proper shelter, nor could I afford to rent any if I wanted to; therefore, getting a proper full night of sleep was not an option, unless, of course, I managed to sneak in somewhere and get some rest until they opened the next morning. But that also proved to be useless after I almost got caught by security on my second night.

I thought of my daughter as I ate, my chest aching at the fact that she could be crying or looking for me; however, I also knew that Alexander would do his best to tend to all her needs until she's forgotten about me. My eyes filled with fresh tears that I wiped as I put the bread back inside my bag, a little more for later when I got hungry tonight.

I put my bag under my head as I lay on it, covering my face with the coat that I was wearing. Having bought it with the first pay that I got after I left. The coat was three times my size and worked to keep me warm, concealed, and was more comfortable than sleeping on the hard brick floors or wet grass.

"I hope you're well, my little pup" I whispered to my daughter, knowing that she wouldn't hear me; however, at least speaking, addressing my words to her made me feel somewhat more content.

I closed my eyes as I felt a breeze of wind hit my covered face, the cold air making my body shudder. I gripped on the coat tightly, ensuring that I covered myself well before allowing sleep to overtake-me, my body losing itself to the

exhaustion that I felt. And imagining myself on my comfortable bed, back at my parents house, everything went dark...

is she dead?" I heard a man ask, his voice close.

"I don't know, but either way, her body seems fresh, we can make use of it..." another said as I heard the sound of a zipper being pulled down. I opened my eyes to frown when I saw the men looking down at me, their eyes somewhat distant. I got up, wrapping myself with my coat and clutching on my bag tightly, surprised that they hadn't taken it.

"Ah, little lady, where do you think you're going?" A man commented, gripping me by my arm. My body tensed, and despite trying to pry my arm from his grip, I couldn't, my body giving up on me before I could do anything about it. A cry of pain escaped my lips when I felt my arm crack under his tight grip.

"Let me GO!" I snapped, trying to push him away to literally no avail. The man wouldn't budge no matter how hard I tried. His friends who were watching, smirked, readying themselves for what they believed would be the prize of their night. How I had managed to fall asleep until now, I had no idea; however, I knew that I was in huge trouble.

"We will, after we are done with you" he said, pushing me to the ground. I went to crawl away, wanting to get up and run only to be surprised when I heard a gunshot. The shot hit my side, forcing my body to drop to the ground before I could make another move "I said, you can leave when we are done with you.

"Please..." I begged, gripping on my side to see my blood oozing from the wound. My heart ached, and my hands shook; however, the man didn't care as he slid my pants down tried to move again; however, two men gripped my hand, and it wasn't until one of them lowered his pants in front of my face, that tears fell from my eyes.

The man went to push his manhood inside my mouth, however, the man's body suddenly fell to the ground before he could make another move. The man with the gun froze, his eyes catching sight of Alexander who stood in front of him. His eyes showed visible anger despite the night's darkness. His growl filled the air, and the man who was standing behind me lifted me to stand, wrapping his arm around me as he pointed the gun at my head.

Alexander's eyes traveled down to my now bloodied body. My legs were starting to get covered with my blood as it poured from the wound on my side, and not wearing my pants didn't make things any better.

She is mine to toy with..."

"One more word about her and I will be sure to rip your neck off that fucking body of yours, and believe me, I won't be lenient" Alexander said, stopping him, baring his canines. My body shook, and my side, which was pressed against the man's waist, ached; however, I couldn't move if I tried. The man's death grip on my neck stopped me, and being as weak as I was, I was thankful for being able to stand.

"You can have her when I am done with her" the man said, looking down at his two dead mates. One of them, I didn't even know what happened to him; however, judging by his misshapen body and head, I could tell that his neck was broken. Alexander looked at me, shaking his head, wanting me to stay calm as he heard my heart race.

My wolf, who was broken, didn't bother responding to him as she allowed my body to weaken instead of helping me stand. I knew that she wanted nothing more than to be dead, and I couldn't blame her, we've suffered enough, and a peaceful death was in order.

The resistance in my body seemed nonexistent, and standing still, I felt my eyes rolling to the back of my head as my vision blurred, both due to the loss of blood and lack of food. Plus, I was exhausted enough as it was, had it not been for the men waking me, I knew that I might have slept till morning.

Now, what happened next was something that I could barely process, both because my body was as weak as hell, and because I was already losing consciousness. The man's arms unwrapped from around me as his body fell limp, and Just as I was about to hit the ground, arms wrapped around me; however, I was aware that they weren't Alexander's.

The man lifted me in his arms with ease, and setting me on the ground, he pulled my pants up as he laid me on his chest "Volkov"

"My apologies for the delay, I had a few things to take care of" the man said, as Alexander sat on his knees in front of me, cupping my cheeks to make me look at him, his eyes softening "she needs to get out of here. Her body is already getting cold, and she is going to need nutrition and blood"

Alexander's eyes studied my expression; however, I flinched when he tried to wrap his arms around me, and it wasn't due to the wound that was hurting me. His eyes softened, and he shook his head at me, not wanting me to be stubborn; however, the last thing I was going to do was listen to one word he was saying. The man has been given too many chances and his actions were what lead us to this.

"Scarlett, we need to get you out of here" he said, mapping his arms around me before I could object, not that I would be able to anyway. The man lifted me in his arms with ease, and laying my head on his chest, he looked at the man who smirked but nodded.

"I'll get things cleared up here, you take your woman back to the pack It seems like she is a handful" Volkov said, smirking at me "I'll see you when we're done with this"

Alexander nodded, not bothering to respond to the man as he turned to walk to the car which parked a few meters away.

I don't want to go anywhere with you" I said weakly, glaring at the man who shook his head at me.

"Sadly, you're stuck with me, neonata, as last I checked, the two of us are mates" he said, taking me by surprise. He kissed my temple before stopping in front of the car for a second. Mason opened the door for him, letting him help me inside before he took a step back "I promise to make all that we've lived through up to you, neonata; however, never think of leaving that way again, okay?"

Alexander:

I ran my finger through Scarlett's hair as she lay asleep after the operation.

The doctors had her sleeping on her stomach to ensure that the stitches healed, and I was thankful that I found her before anything happened.

Anastasia, who has been crying nonstop, refusing to drink any milk, and simply sleeping out of exhaustion calmed down, falling asleep peacefully after a bottle of milk as she took in her mom's scent.

Mom, who was still confused about what happened, simply came to check in on her every once and a while, and I couldn't bring myself to put my head on a pillow no matter how hard I tried.

The fact that we found her at a last minute after smelling her blood, my wolf went mad, practically guiding me to her. It killed me inside that it was me who led her to dealing with this, and I couldn't help but feel responsible for everything that she had to deal with.

"I'm so sorry, neonata" I whispered to her, leaning to kiss her hand. The woman had gone through so much hell because of me, and because of me simply wanting to feed my hunger, and the more I thought of it, the more I regretted breaking her heart.

I knew that last night was the last straw, and that I would need to work harder than I ever have to try and regain her trust or at least, try to get her to look at me the same way she looked at me when we were friends.

I looked at Anastasia who was peacefully sleeping in her crib before hearing footsteps approaching my father. He simply stood by the door, watching me, waiting for me to get up from the edge of the bed to come to him, and doing as requested, I walked toward him and crossed my arms over my chest, waiting for his accusations or questions.

He stayed quiet for a few seconds as he simply stared at me, studying my expression, taunting me, and it wasn't until he saw that I was growing uncomfortable that he opened his mouth to speak_

"I know that you're expecting me to scold you, or to throw harsh words at you; however, I believe that what you went through today is enough for you to actually understand that your actions have consequences. What I am actually disappointed about is that you had to wait until the age of twenty-three to understand it, and that an innocent girl was who suffered for it" he said, looking me in the eye. I looked down at my feet, not wanting to look at him, knowing that he was right. It was Scarlett who paid the price of my actions and that alone was something that I knew she wasn't going to forgive or forget. Hell, the woman was willing to let her daughter go because she didn't want to see her as weak or discriminated against.

I understand that you might not want her as your mate or might not want her around you in your life; however, do not torment the woman, we all know that

she does not deserve that. She has always loved and respected you, maybe the feelings weren't mutual, but..."

"She is an omega, dad" I said, stopping him "even if I did love her, even if..."

"Does it matter what her position is to you that much?" He asked "if she was an Alpha born, or a beta even, would it have been different? This is not how a heart chooses who it wants, and this is not how a mate is even chosen"

"How would the other packs see her? You have to understand that I have other allying packs, and then knowing that my mate is an omega..."

"Would change nothing, Alexander" he said, stopping me "unless you choose to disrespect her. You set, that is the funny game of life. Your woman could be an Alpha, not even an Alpha born, a

Alpha, and she could be disrespected by everyone if her mate, regardless of his position, disrespects her. However, a woman can be an omega, or a human even, someone with no rank or 'position' of pack strength, and yet, she could be respected, loved, and even cherished by everyone It all just depends on how YOU treat your mate and how YOU force everyone to treat her"

"At this point, I don't think that Scarlett would ever bother looking at me again, let alone giving me a chance as her mate" I said, shaking my head.

"You would be surprised" he said, smiling at me "The woman has a big heart, and if you're smart enough to earn it, I am guessing that you can get past this. I am not saying that it will be done tomorrow. The damage that happened to her is far greater than that; but with time, and patience, she might be willing to give you a chance, and you two might end up becoming lovers"

"Yeah, you are forgetting the fact that she..."

"She will forgive you if you want her to, Alexander" he said, stopping me "but if you don't, it won't happen. It is what it is, and that is the stupid game of life. Yes, it is sometimes odd, and maybe unfair even, but we have to play as it is, and if you want something to happen, to REALLY happen, then you have to fight and work for it; otherwise, I am telling you again, let her go and find someone who will really love her"

He put his hand on my shoulder, gently squeezing it, before taking a step back and turning toward the living room where I knew mom was waiting for

him before they left my house, leaving me alone with my mate. I entered the room and stayed quiet, processing what he said, my chest aching at the thought of letting her go, but could she actually want to leave? Did she not want to stay with me?

The possibilities of the answer being yes, she really did not want me in her life anymore were high; however, I still held onto the hope that things might be different and that she might, if possibly, want to give me a chance. But why would she?

After everything that I have done to her, why would she want to spare me a second glance? Could her heart really be as big as dad just described it?

Could she even look at me without hating my guts?

All these questions ran through my mind as I entered the room. My heart ached with each step I took as I realized that these might be the last days the two of us actually spend together; however, I knew that dad was right. I couldn't hold her back any longer, it was unfair for her, and if I was going to torment her selfishly, then I was the one in fault here, and that was not something that I wanted to do.

I sat on the edge of the bed beside her, looking at her wounded side which was shot, remembering her sight as the men stood in front of and behind her, threatening to take advantage of her after shooting her. My chest ached, and leaning in to her shoulder, I kissed it very gently.

"Losing you is the worst mistake that I have ever done, my beautiful wolf; however, if you accept giving me a chance, then I will be more than happy to fight to earn your heart and trust" I whispered before laying down beside her, looking at her, admiring her features for a few seconds "I'm so sorry for everything, neonata..."

Scarlett:

I woke up to Anastasia's crying.

My head throbbed; however, I forced myself to open my eyes to look at my daughter who was in her crib

I tried getting up from bed only to frown when I couldn't.

“Don’t, Scarlett” I heard Alexander say, his voice deep from sleep as he lay beside me. He put his hand on my shoulder, forcing me down, before getting up to tend to our daughter.

He carried her in his arms, and held her to his chest before walking toward me with her in his arm. He sat on the edge of the bed beside me, and lowered her on his lap to show her to me. I smiled and took her hand in mine, gently kissing her fingers, inhaling her scent.

“Hello, bambina” I whispered to her. Alexander stayed still and didn’t say a word as he watched me, smiling at my daughter. Anastasia cried again, and I could tell that she was hungry “I think that she’s hungry”

“I know, but I figured that you’ve missed her” Alexander said, making my chest ache. He was right, I did miss her a lot.

“Thank you” I said, looking at my daughter’s feet “you can take her to feed her, I won’t be able to move if I wanted to”

The memories of the other night played in my head, and the pain in my side only reminded me of it.

Alexander didn’t say a word as he got up to feed her. He pulled her bottle out of the fridge and put it in the baby bottle heater as he rocked her gently. Anastasia’s eyes were fixed on mine, and extending her hand toward me, I couldn’t help the smile that formed on my face, momentarily forgetting the pain that I was feeling.

Alexander removed the bottle from the heater and sat on the floor, feeding it to her as he walked toward the bed to sit beside me, allowing me to see her. I kept my eyes on hers, not knowing what to say or do. I didn’t even know why I was here or what he wanted to do with me. His words played in my head as he lifted me in his arms after killing the men. I didn’t know what happened to their bodies, and I didn’t care about finding out, all I wanted was for the nightmare that kept playing in my head to stop.

“How do you feel, Scarlett?” Alexander asked, breaking the train of my thoughts. I stayed quiet, not knowing how to respond to him, not really sure about what he was asking to begin with. Was he being direct about the bullet wound? Was it the fact that he just found me after I left the pack? Or after almost being abused? I didn’t know. Hell, I didn’t even know how I was

feeling to begin with, all I knew was that I was in pain, and a lot of pain actually.

I didn't respond, and thankfully, Alexander didn't press on the subject as I closed my eyes. My heart ached at the fact that I was closing my eyes while in front of my daughter who I haven't seen in more

than a week; however, she was better off without me anyway, therefore, I shouldn't have been as upset or hurt.

"You know, Nasia wouldn't stop crying until you came home last night" Alexander said, knowing that I was awake despite my closed eyes. My breathing pattern was far too disordered for me to be asleep, but I still didn't open my eyes "she barely ate, and at times, the nurses had to force her to drink her milk. In the end, they had an IV in her hand to ensure feeding. She would cry almost all night and would only sleep out of exhaustion"

Again, I didn't respond, knowing that it was impossible to be true. My daughter was a baby, she

wouldn't have known if I disappeared, and adoption mothers were known all around, whether human or wolf. If they could feed and accept a baby, they could adopt them as their own. Therefore, him saying what he was must have been a lie, one to maybe make me feel better about myself.

He got up from the edge of the bed, and opening my eyes, I saw that he was putting the bottle away as he burped Anastasia. A tear left my right eye, and closing my eyes again, I tried to avoid the man seeing me in such a state. The last thing I needed was for him to see me as weak or to see how much pain I was in.

She burped and he smiled, kissing her cheek before putting her to sleep inside her crib again, and that was when I allowed myself to close my eyes again. He walked to my side and sat on the edge of the bed, gently running his finger over my cheek as he looked at me.

"I know that you're not asleep, Scarlett" he said, his voice above a whisper. I sniffed, and squeezed my eyes shut before turning my head to the other side, knowing that I couldn't turn. He was sitting on the side that I was injured on; therefore, to turn and give him my side would only mean that I would end up sleeping on the wound.

“I know that you’re angry with me...”

“Please stop talking” I said, stopping him “please stop pretending like you care, because you don’t. You must have been pressured by your parents to bring me back or Delilah didn’t accept being my daughter’s mother; therefore, please, I am fucking begging you, do not pretend that I mean anything to you”

I didn’t turn to face him as I spoke, and closing my eyes, I felt him getting up from the edge of the bed. He walked toward the bedroom’s door, and called a nurse inside before walking out and closing the door without saying a word. My heart ached; however, I wasn’t stupid as to fall for the same trick again. I tried giving him the chance of being his friend or even believing that he wanted something to do with me; however, what did I gain? A man who has done nothing but insult me for the simplest of things and reminded me of mistakes that I knew I made.

My heart ached, and squeezing my eyes shut, I forced myself to sink in the darkness of my dreams. At least there, I was safe. There, in my dreams, no one could hurt me. I was alone, free, and sometimes, I could at least see myself getting what I wanted.

And the one thing I really wanted today was not to be here. I did NOT want to stay here...

A finger ran over my shoulder, startling me awake.

My heart raced, and opening my eyes, I met Alexander’s as he removed his hand quickly, not wanting to frighten me.

My heart raced, and looking at the crib that was now beside the bed, I frowned when I saw that it was moved to my side to begin with.

“What are you doing here?”

The nurses want to come to check on and change your bandage; however, I figured waking you up before they entered would be more applicable” he said, and I nodded, looking at the crib “I brought it beside you so you see her...”

“Alexander, return her crib to its original place. I am already injured; therefore, there is no point in having me hurt her...”

"You are not going to hurt her, Scarlett. Your injury is covered and cleaned. But she seems more comfortable with you by her side..."

"Please don't play this game on me because I am not going to fall for it. I already have once and it won't happen again. Therefore, please, return her crib to its place and leave me alone. I wish to get some rest" I said, stopping him, ignoring the clench in my chest.

"Scarlett, do you really not miss her?" Alexander asked, breaking my soul. If only he knew how much I wanted her in my arms. The man broke too much for me to be able to mend, and at this point, I just wanted to drown in my own sorrows until I was able to stand on my feet again.

"You as a person need to stop trying to accuse me with things that I have never said" I said, shaking my head at him "I do not want to touch her, and I do not want her crib beside the bed. You can take me out of this room and to my house if you like..."

"Scarlett, the baby needs her mother by her side"

"She has her father, and I believe that you can take care of her" I said coldly, treating him like he's treated me. Alexander stayed quiet after that, and instead of throwing any harsh words, he got up from bed and put her in her crib, moving it back to its spot.

However, that wasn't what surprised me, what surprised me was that instead of leaving like I expected him to, he turned to his side, the side that he was sleeping on last night, and lay beside me. His eyes were fixed on mine for a second before he kissed my shoulder.

"I know that you're angry with me, Scarlett; however, Anastasia is just a baby and you taking your anger out on her is unfair" he said, his voice softening "not on you or her, I just want you to keep that in mind..."

Alexander:

I woke up to Scarlett trying to move.

My arm was draped around her, pulling her to my chest, and sitting up, I frowned in confusion when she tried forcing herself to sit.

“Scarlett, what are you doing?” I asked, rubbing the sleep from my eyes, my voice deep and raspy.

“I need to go to the bathroom” she said, looking down at her pillow. I smiled at her and wrapped an arm around her, making her tense “what are you doing?”

“Helping you, Scarlett” “I don’t need...”

“You do, neonata” I said, helping her sit up. She didn’t respond, and tightening my arm around her, I helped her sit down. I got up from the bed and turned to sit on my knees in front of her, knowing that she wouldn’t be able to stand; however, I knew that she would try her best to do so, and that wasn’t something that I wanted.

“Why are you doing this, Alexander?”

“Scar, you do realize that you still are my mate, and the mother of my daughter, right?” I asked, keeping my eyes on hers. Tears filled her eyes, and to my surprise, her wolf whimpered. I purred, wanting to comfort her before a low growl and louder whimper escaped her chest. I cupped her cheeks, purring again, not wanting her to react aggressively, already expecting the reaction from her. My beauty was both injured, physically, and emotionally hurt; therefore, I knew to expect that things won’t be easy anymore. She has given her chances, it was me who lost them, and now was time for me to make it up to her.

“Do you want us to get up?” I asked, running my finger over her cheek. She didn’t respond for a second before she nodded, and smiling, I stood up and helped her stand on her feet. At least, allowing her to try walking on her own, or supporting her after she allows it would give me a small extra advantage. She forced herself to stay on her feet, and despite not wanting to, I took a step back, making sure to be careful.

She went to take a step forward before a sob escaped her lips “I can’t...”

“Shhh, Scarlett” I whispered to her, breaking at her sight. I knew that it was because she was feeling helpless, and after the trauma that she’s been through, I knew that things were going to be hard. I wrapped my arm around her shoulder, and taking her right hand in mine, I allowed her to rest her weight on me, supporting her body, not that she was even heavy. The woman was lighter than she ever was lately, and I knew that it was due to the lack of food in her system “we’ll walk together, yeah?”

She nodded, and taking a step forward, the two of us walked toward the bathroom where I helped her inside. Her cheeks reddened, and shaking her head, I knew that she didn't want me helping her here "Scarlett, you would be doing the same thing for me..."

"Alexander..."

"Look at me, Scarlett" I said, cupping her right cheek as I made sure to keep my left around her waist, ensuring that I didn't touch her wounded area "the two of us are in this together. Yes, I know that I wasn't the best mate to you, and I know that you have so many reasons to doubt every single word I say right now; however, I want you to give me a chance, okay?"

I opened my eyes to find Scarlett laying on my chest, silently running her finger over it, drawing random patterns.

I could tell that she's been awake for a while now; however, for some reason, she chose to stay in bed, in my arms, and not that I minded. If anything, I didn't mind at all.

"Hey" I whispered, taking her off guard. She jumped, despite still being in my arms, and looking at me, she raised herself to look at me, I smiled when I saw the blush on her cheeks.

"I didn't mean to wake you, I apologize" she said, making me chuckle.

"You didn't wake me up, Scarlett. If anything, this has been the best sleep that I've had in a while" I said, being completely honest. Having woken up a few times to tend to Anastasia before dawn, I was finally able to get some shut eye after giving her to one of the night shift nurses to take care of her. Scarlett, who was under painkillers, was fast asleep.

"Where is Anastasia?" Scarlett asked, making me smile. Her wanting to see her was something that I was grateful for, especially since she's been resenting her since she came back.

I gave her to one of the nurses a few hours ago. I needed to get some rest, and I didn't want her waking you up when we both know that you won't be able to..."

“Thank you” she said, stopping me. I smiled and nodded, and running my hand over her right cheek I smiled when she leaned in to my touch. Her cheeks reddening a bit.

“How are you feeling? Does anything hurt...?”

“Why are you doing this, Alexander?” She asked, stopping me “one minute you hate me, but then the other...”

“Have you ever heard of the term or saying that state that a woman knows her house’s value when she lives in the house; however, a man tends to realize it after she’s gone?” I asked, making her frown. I smiled, and shook my head at her. She didn’t even know how worried I was about her, and the fact that Anastasia went crazy over the fact that her mother wasn’t around didn’t escape my mind. The two of us were mates, and instead of being there for her, I rejected and broke her heart “I regretted you choosing to leave on the night that you left, and I know that you might not believe me right now, but Anastasia didn’t accept anyone else. It made me realize that something was shaken in MY house and pack, and it was due to you not being here”

“No one in the pack cares whether or not I was around, Alexander. At least, no one aside from your parents” she said, avoiding my eyes “I’m the lowest of all ranks, and whether or not I was around wouldn’t make a difference...”

“It made a difference to me” I said, stopping her. She frowned in confusion, trying to process my words, however, I simply smiled at her, knowing that my words probably didn’t make any sense to her right now. Hell, the woman has been through too much for her to be speaking to me right now; therefore, to know that she was managing to form a full sentence with me told me that things might, if by a small shot, get better “I know that it’s hard to believe after everything that you’ve been through; but you not being here confused, angered, and annoyed my wolf. Yes, the two of us weren’t a couple before; but somehow, I knew that you were always at home...”

“I can’t always stay here if you don’t want me to be, Alexander” she said, stopping me. Her eyes welled up with tears, but I didn’t say a word to stop her from what she was going to say, wanting to hear her out “for years, I wished to grow to be eighteen to find my mate. You have no idea how much I prayed for it. The walls grew tighter on me as years grew by, especially knowing that I never knew my parents. Yes, your parents took me in as a daughter, but fuck’s sake, I wasn’t stupid, I have been living in that house, alone, with a maid, since I was nine”

"I had no family, I had no one around. I barely joined you guys to eat before going back to my house where I would be alone, surrounded by the empty walls of the house. Maids or not, everyone saw me as the outcast that no one wanted, but saw that they were forced to keep around because they knew..." she stopped herself from completing her sentence; however, I knew what she wanted to say. Scarlett simply felt, or more specifically, knew, that most of the pack was aware that she got special treatment because of her parents' sacrifice. The other omegas were nothing but workers in the pack, while she was was different. She was treated differently and everyone knew that.

"You know for fact that it doesn't matter what they do or don't think, Scarlett" I said, understanding that she wouldn't bother saying anything else.

"It did, it does, and it always has" she said, making me frown in confusion, waiting for her to explain what she wanted to say. Her opening up, breaking down, or even yelling at me now would be a whole lot better than her just blocking her feelings inside her. At least I would know what I was dealing with and how I would be able to help her with it.

"Why would you say that, Scarlett?"

"Because if it wasn't the case, then the two of us would have never stopped being friends. Yes, I understand that you could have rejected me anyway. I am not worthy of being an Alpha's mate; however, us being friends would have never changed" she said, her tone broken. I stared at the woman who lay in my arms, knowing well that she was helpless and at my mercy at the moment. Her heart raced against her chest as she grew emotional, and it was then that I realized that she was completely shattered. Hell, the woman's heart was broken and I didn't even think she realized it.

"I don't know how I will do it, Scarlett" I said, my tone softening as I kept my eyes on hers, wanting her to see my honesty in my eyes "but I will make it up to you. One way or the other, I will make things right, with you, my beautiful neonata"

Scarlett:

"Do you want to eat something?" Alexander asked, entering the room with a tray of food in his hand, his tone so gentle that a crying baby would have quieted down.

I shook my head in response, not really feeling the need to eat anything. Hell, I was exhausted enough as it was; I didn't want to eat anything, and my mind was in a complete mess anyway. The man himself could tell, I knew that, however, seeing as he was still trying his best to try and open a conversation, I knew not to close the door now.

He has been doing his best to get me to talk to him, and knowing that I was just choosing to stay quiet, I was honestly surprised that he was yet to give up. His eyes met mine, studying my expression before he sighed "Scarlett, you need to eat to regain your strength..."

"You do realize that you've said the same thing over ten times, every single day, for a week, right?" I asked, stopping him. He pinched the bridge of his nose before sitting on the edge of the bed. He set the tray on the bedside table, wanting the food's smell to at least get a reaction from me. Anything to indicate that I was hungry. In reality, I knew that I should have been. Unless it was the IV or a few bites of whatever Alexander would bring in to me, I was refusing to eat almost everything. However, I knew that it was due to being tired, insecure, and hurt. The pain that I was feeling was one that I never felt before, not even when I found out that Luna Katlyn wasn't my real mum, or when I found out that I was nothing but an omega who they sent to live alone.

This pack has seen a lot, and one of the things that were seen was my downfall. I went from being the Alpha and Luna's daughter, theoretically, I didn't know that they weren't my parents, to being an Omega, the lowest of ranks. Then one day, I went from being the Alpha's best friend to being his nemesis. Finally, from his Luna, to a rejected woman. I didn't know why my fate was laid out as it was; however, I truly did hope for a better ending for me in the end. At least something to be worth the patience that I've forced on myself.

"Scarlett, just a few bites. I know that you're not feeling it, and I know for fact that you're doing this because you're in pain; but for fucks sake, please don't give up on yourself" he begged, taking my right hand in both of his, holding it tightly. It upset me more that I only saw this side of him because he saw me almost being abused and probably getting killed. How he had found me the other night, I didn't even know, but I never really bothered to ask. I didn't really care if I was going to be honest.

"Can I ask what you're benefiting out of all this?" I asked, shaking my head in question. I knew that I had shut my emotions off. I didn't care what he would say at that moment. He could want to kill me or want me to kill him, and it

would be my rational mind, if I can call my mental state anywhere near being rational, that was talking and would be reacting “don’t get me wrong, but the two of us know that you don’t really care about me”

“I do”

“You do not I said, shaking my head at him “one minute you do, then the second you see me smiling, you just say or do something that would break my soul. Finally, when you’re sure that my heart is broken and that I am Just waiting for my time to either come or to leave, you just try and make me...”

“Do you want to leave?” He asked, stopping me. My heart ached, and frowning, I waited for what he had to say before coming to conclusions or responding I he man already knew that I tried to leave, twice, and I was more than willing to do so again if I wasn’t on this stupid bed, barely able to move.

“I can help you if you really are insisting to do so. I know that you wouldn’t be able to take care of Anastasia on your own, at least, not unfunded. I can manage...”

“I don’t want your money, Alexander. You’re just going to end up...”

“I have done you enough pain to hurt you with a matter of money, Scarlett. I know that if you choose to leave, it is because of what I did to you, therefore, I will ask one more time, (Do you want to leave?)”

“And if I say yes.”

“Then you are free to leave and I will not pressure you into trying to make things right. Yes; I will try to fix our friendship enough for us to be able to co-parent our daughter; however, I won’t be that barrier that prevents you from finding your life” he said, keeping his eyes on mine. I knew that things couldn’t be THAT simple. This was Alexander that we were talking about; however, I chose to stay quiet as I looked down at my lap.

“But if you do choose to stay...” he said, breaking my train of thoughts, making me frown in confusion “I know that you may find that this could be somewhat absurd, and you may be too angry with me to want to accept me. However, if you think that I am worth one percent of your time, and a small chance, a literal one percent chance, I would love for us to try and start again”

“Alexander...”

"I am not looking for an answer today or tomorrow, Scarlett. I won't let you leave before I know that you're able to get on your feet. But I still want you to think about it then when I know that you're strong enough, and you're sure of your decision, I won't be holding you back no matter what it is" he said, giving me a weak smile. He looked at Anastasia's crib for a second before getting up from bed. His eyes were genuine, and for the first time in years, I saw the man that I fell in love with long before I knew that the two of us were mates "try to eat something. Your body still needs food to recover, and considering that you're still on an IV, you're losing more weight than you should"

Alexander didn't wait for me to say a word before he walked to the door, probably knowing that I was too lost in my thoughts, and mostly because he didn't want me seeing him as broken as he was. However, his racing heart and shortened breath despite keeping his posture strong and controlled told me that what he told me must have been the hardest thing that he's been forced to do.

First, because it meant that he was accepting the fact that I would be taking our daughter with me, and that she wouldn't be here by his side like he wanted. And second, because he knew that the second I chose to leave would be the second that his wolf breaks. The man's wolf was still in control even after the rejection, and that was because he had Delilah in his arms and because he could see me. However, if he chose to let me leave, and was still willing to co-parent, that only meant that the two of us would be spending time together, time that might have us living feelings that we 'chose' to agree to let go of.

I ran my fingers through my hair before laying down on my back, thankful for the painkillers that I was on, knowing that they were the ONLY reason why I was able to do so; otherwise, I wouldn't have been able to move a muscle.

"Think, Scarlett, what do you really want to do?" I asked myself, thinking out loud, my chest aching. The air felt tight around me, and despite being alone in the room, I couldn't help but feel like I was being strangled. The fact that I knew that this time, I wasn't alone I had a daughter to think of, and that alone was enough to put a burden on my back as I didn't want my choice to end up harming her, and on the other hand, there was MY life, one that I knew that I had to live healthy; otherwise, I knew that whether or not I left, I would end up losing my mind if it was toxic, and that was not something that I wanted.

“What are you going to do, Scarlett?” I asked, shaking my head as I stared at the ceiling “and how would that affect your life and your daughter’s in the future?”

Alexander:

My chest ached with each step I took toward the bedroom, knowing that Scarlett was able to take her first steps on her own after the injury.

The fact that she could easily choose to leave with Anastasia was something that kept playing in my head, and the more I thought of it, the more worried I became.

I entered the nursery to find her standing in front of Anastasia’s crib, smiling down at our daughter who was cooing at her mother. I clenched my fist for a second before smiling when I approached the two of them “hey”

Scarlett startled me when she was the one to greet me first, especially since I grew used to the fact that she would mostly stay quiet whenever I was around her.

heard from the nurses that you were able to get out of bed on your own, and thought to come and see for myself” I said, smiling at her. Scarlett/ smiled and nodded, twirling around slowly to show me that she was standing, happy for herself that she was.

“Yes, I still can’t risk trying to carry Nasia though. I’m still waiting for that day to come, but at least I was able to hold her in my arms while I sat down” she said and I nodded “I think that you’re here mostly because you’re worried about what I decided about the two of us...”

“Scarlett, you just took your first step...”

“Anastasia and I are not going anywhere, Alexander” she said, stopping me. My heart raced and I froze, trying to process whether or not I heard her correctly. The smile on her face told me that I have; however, I couldn’t help the clench that I felt in my chest as I worried about what she would tell me after that. She nodded at me to sit on the edge of the bed, and sitting beside me, I noticed that she was sure to keep a small distance between us “I know that it is hard on you to accept that your daughter would grow far away from you, and I am not stupid as not to know that I won’t be able to raise her up myself. Hell, I had to drop out of university because of this”

“You what?” I asked, frowning in confusion.

“I couldn’t manage, Alexander. I tried when I was pregnant, but after giving birth, getting ill, and all. It was either I failed or dropped out. I chose not to fail at this too”

“Scarlett, why didn’t you tell me?” I asked, glaring at her.

“It is not something that I had to consult you with, Alexander” she said, glaring back at me “I was in too much pain to be able to focus, and trying to leave didn’t make this any easier. I could barely study, and I couldn’t have survived the semester if I tried. Yes, I wanted to, very much; however, I knew my capabilities enough to know when to stop”

I stayed quiet for a few seconds, not reacting before I nodded, wanting her to go on. I had nothing to tell her about this, and fighting over it won’t change the facts. She chose to drop out, and that was something that she would regret later, I knew it. However, I was going to ensure that she somehow managed to get back once she’s fully healed. I just needed her to regain her strength first.

“I know that our story is not, and might never be fairytales, and I know that you could easily go and try finding a different woman to sleep with...”

“Scarlett...”

“As long as you came home to us at night, I would take whatever it is you choose to do” she said, not allowing me to finish. I frowned, and looking down at my lap, I stayed quiet as I waited for her to finish “[don’t want my daughter to grow up without her father, especially since I know what it is to not have parents; therefore, if you’re willing to accept me as her mother, and her your daughter, in this house, I’ll be more than willing to stay”

“I was the one who told you that I wanted you to stay, Scarlett. I didn’t want you leaving, and it is for so many reasons, one of them being that I didn’t want to be separated from my daughter; however, I am not stupid, and I have seen that she can’t live without you as her mom” I said, looking at her “as to answer your condition, I already told you, I want you as my mate. I am not saying today or tomorrow. It could take a year for you to accept me touching you again let alone mark you; however, if you’re willing to give me the chance to do so, I am more than willing to try and satisfy you in every possible way”

"That is not a decision that I can take on my own, and you do realize that, right?" She asked, her tone more mature than it has ever been. It killed me to know that I knew that she had shut her humanity off for her to be able to grow this cold. My mate, the joyful woman who I knew could have made anyone laugh on their hardest days, was now unable to find her own true smile, and it hurt me more to know that it was mostly my fault.

"I know that your wolf is hurt, and I know that she has been silenced since I rejected you; but Scarlett..." "Alexander, the last thing I want right now is to be in pain" she said, stopping me "whether or not my wolf has been silent on me does not matter. What matters is that our daughter grows up healthy and sane. I don't want her dealing with the same things that I was forced to live through, and I don't want you to deal with the pain of missing a lot of your child growing up. Especially at this phase"

I didn't say anything, and instead, I chose to wrap my arms around her, pulling her to my chest, careful not to touch her wounded side. I knew that her being able to walk didn't mean that she had healed; however, I was just thankful for the fact that she was able to both talk and walk without being in so much pain. She stayed quiet, and it took her a while to allow herself to relax in my embrace; however, when she did, I could hear her wolf's low purrs as she gave in to her mate's touch. At least, despite Scarlett forcing herself into quietness, her wolf was able to feel me as her mate.

"I will be sure to awaken those emotions of yours again, my beautiful neonate" I whispered to her "the pain that I forced you to go through is not one that I want you living with. Yes, it will take you a while to heal, and yes, I know that you might never forgive me for the pain that you've been through. Whether it is the simple trauma or what you lived while gone. But I will fight for you with my life if I have to, and I will ensure that the smile that was wiped from your face comes back again"

"Even a hurricane has a rainbow at the end of it" she said, pulling away from the hug. It was something that she told me years ago when she found out about her parents. I remember her crying for hours, and despite already knowing about it since we were young, I never had the heart to tell her about it. I never wanted her to feel like she would be left out. It sickened me that I allowed myself to do what I fought to make sure she didn't live through.

"Yes, and somehow, maybe one day, we will find our rainbow" I said, keeping my eyes on hers. Scarlett didn't say a word, and leaning in, I found myself stopping when our breaths started mixing, giving her the time to pull away if

she wanted to. However, thankful that she didn't, I allowed my lips to brush over hers, giving her the last chance to move back. Again, she didn't. her body remained perfectly still, and when I pressed my tips against hers, her kiss was almost instantaneous.

Our lips moved in sync, one that I have been longing for since our first night together. The fact that she has been k**sing me willingly made me wonder whether or not she felt anything toward the k*ss. I knew that she felt something to me when we kissed the first time; however, knowing that she had shut off her humanity and emotions, I wasn't sure whether or not she could feel anything.

I wrapped my arms around her waist, wanting to pull her to my lap; but our beautiful little Anastasia suddenly decided to cry, breaking our moment, forcing us apart. Scarlett looked at me, her cheeks reddening, and shaking my head at her. I wasn't sure whether or not it was good for her to put in too much effort, I got up from the bed and walked toward the crib and lifted our baby in my arms.

Anastasia's cries grew louder, and it wasn't until I sat beside Scarlett who put her finger in our daughter's hand that she calmed a bit, taking in her mom's scent. I ran my finger over her shoulder gently rubbing it, watching as she took her mom's finger and put it in her mouth, gently sucking on it, Scarlett laughed and leaned in to kiss her stomach. I smiled at the sight, and looking up at me, Scarlett smiled back.

"I think that we could make a good family, don't you?" I asked, smirking as she allowed herself to let go of her anger for a few seconds.

"Yes, provided that we ensure that we don't burn this pack to the ground, why not?"

"I believe that it may be time to announce you as my mate. Maybe that would give you some assurance that I wouldn't let you go, and would prove a point to the other pack members that you are their Luna" I said, making Scarlett raise an eyebrow.

I am going to say something, and you are not going to lash out at me or get angry" Scarlett said, and I raised an eyebrow, waiting for what she had to say. She removed her hand from Anastasia's mouth and focused her attention on me for a second, studying my expression "you do realize that in doing so, you won't be able to get back to Delilah..."

“I do not want to ..”

“Alexander, I am not speaking in terms of you being angry right now. That is the last thing that I want; however, just as you asked me to be sure of my answer. You gave me a month, while I was healing, to decide whether or not I was willing to stay with you” she said, taking a deep breath, her heart racing as she spoke. She put her hand on my knee, and squeezing it gently, she nodded, giving me a weak smile “are you sure that you have thought this thoroughly? I know this sounds odd coming from me right now; however, I want to know that you’re not using me to get over her”

“I wouldn’t use you, Scarlett” I said, watching as she removed her hand “I have taken my time to think as well and I realized that I was more afraid of losing you and you leaving as days...”

“Were you afraid of losing me or just the fact that Anastasia won’t be around?” Scarlett asked, stopping me. I knew that her question was directed to the fact of her no longer being confident about herself. The insecurities that I’ve built in her were making her react the way she was, and that was something that made me want to gut myself more than she even knew.

I was afraid of losing you as my mate, and my daughter” I said, avoiding her eyes “I realized a bit late that I was only comfortable with Delilah because of her position as being an Alpha born. Me rejecting you didn’t affect me much because I knew that you were always around. I could smell your scent, and feel your presence. However, when you left the first time, even though I never did admit it, I knew that things were not the same for me anymore. First, I couldn’t feel Delilah after touching you. There were so many nights when I couldn’t even share a bed with her, and regardless of how she felt, at that time I didn’t care”

I recalled the number of times Delilah got so upset with me not wanting her around that she would say things that despite both of us knowing how true they were, I would never admit it I was just denying myself, my wolf, and my pack their true Luna for her.

“Next was after finding you. Yes, I fought you with everything that I had. Hell, I got so angry with myself and you at times that I broke everything down only to realize that I was mostly mad at myself. My anger was never at YOU in specific. It was me being angry with myself, and I was just taking it out on you” I said, looking at the wall ahead of me, holding Anastasia in my arms “and third was you leaving this time, You have no idea how worried I was about you

despite knowing that Mason was following you, I was still more than a little angry with myself that I made you leave that way. Finally, Mason losing track of you. You have no idea how scared I grew. I couldn't sit for a second until I knew where you were..."

"How did you find me?" She asked, stopping me "I was sure to stay..."

"I had a friend, Volkov, hack the city's cameras and security system to find you. it took a while, but we eventually managed to trace where you were last seen heading to the park. From there, I followed your silent" I said, and she nodded. Recalling how I found her on the floor, her blood beside her as she fighting the men who were about to take advantage of her, I couldn't help the anger that I felt towards myself, however, I was sure not to show it to her at that very moment.

"I believe that things have gone far too messed up for the two of us to simply forget the past..."

"Fut that does not mean that we cannot build our future" I said, stopping her "yes, we had a rocky time; however, every relationship has that every once and a while, and eventually, somehow, you find yourself getting out of it"

"What if we don't...?" We will"

"And why are you so sure of it?" she asked, frowning in confusion "I'm still this pack's omega, no one would spare me a second glance as the pack's Luna let alone your mate"

"Leave that up to me" I said, smiling at her "all I want to be sure of is that you accept me as your mare. The rest, I will manage"