



Chapter 102

"Tatum, where is this?"

Leila asks when Tatum takes off her blindfold and her vision is welcomed by a dimly lit cave with candle lamps hanging from the walls, a small red clothed table with two glasses and a bottle of wine on top of it, as well as an array of covered dishes.

Red rose petals cover every expanse of the floor, including where she is standing and she turns to look at Tatum, confusion and curiosity clear in her eyes.

She guessed right, this is a date but why a cave of all places?

"What do you think of our crime scene detective?" Tatum asks with a small smile, watching her reaction as she takes in the scenery.

"Well it's quite aesthetic I should say, our culprit put in a lot of thought. Favourite flowers, nice ambience, favourite wine, I'm sure I can smell the sweet savoury dishes covered as well, perfect to lure our victim to—" she pauses, "what happened to the victim?"

"That's why I brought you here detective, to figure out what happened but I'll tell you the story as I know it," Tatum replies, pulling back one of the two seats for Leila.

"Twelve years ago, a young lady was kidnapped and brought here but her kidnapper was not an enemy, in fact, he was her best friend, she trusted him."

"No way....." Leila gasps and she stands up swiftly, her heart lunging from her chest, her mouth wide open. "This is that cave?"

She knows the story Tatum is about to tell her, the day she suggested they fake her kidnap so her mom would not give her a good beating for giving all of her friends the muffins her mom baked for her dad.

It was a really stupid and childish idea then but it worked. With her mom being worried over her whereabouts, taking a switch at her over the muffins never happened. Her mom was the disciplinarian of their household. Her dad, despite being the head warrior, was an absolute softie when it came to her.

Tatum brought her to the outskirts, to this cave, that day she—

“Do you remember what I told you that day?” Tatum’s soft voice echoes through the cave but it hits Leila hard with a memory she had long forgotten.

She ignores Tatum’s question, walking further into the cave and as she does, the motion sensors on the lamps hanging from the wall continue to illuminate her path as she treads over the red roses till she comes to a halt.

She grips her chest, her heart squeezing with strong and mixed emotions of bitter joy and a single tear drop runs down her eye as she crouches over a small boulder attached to the base of the cave wall.

“It’s still here....” she mutters, glancing up at Tatum who stands behind her with his own heart threatening to tear out of his chest.

He watches as Leila runs her hand over the inscription on the rock. Leila’s name written above with his name written below, a single stroke dividing it and it is enclosed by the shape of a heart.

Below the heart are two skeletal human caricatures holding hands,



standing on top of one word.

FOREVER.

They drew this together that day in their childish infatuation for one another. Hers may have grown thin as they grew older but his only grew stronger.

“Leila...I-” Tatum gulps, feeling his heart pound even harder as she turns to look at him with tears coating her ocean eyes, the most beautiful eyes he has ever seen on a woman.

He is scared to lose her, scared that she will take the cure, find Kelvin as her mate and abandon him.

Fear, anguish, worry, strife, trepidation, horror, name it all.

They are nothing compared to what he is feeling.

The thought of Leila leaving him is beyond terrifying, he dare not fathom the reality.

He is madly in love with this woman. Despite their current circumstances, all he wants is to be with her.

“Leila I.....”

He finds the words hard to say, no matter how many times in the last hours that he has rehearsed it, he finds his racing heart clobbering against his tongue, jumbling up the words in his head but he has to tell her.

It is his last resort.

There may still be a tiny part of her that loves him as she used to when

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they were kids. Maybe she can give him a chance and choose him after she takes the cure and finds her mate.

Maybe she can make the same sacrifice that he has.

It's selfish of him, he knows, it's a big ask, yes, but what choice does he have?

Life without her without her would be meaningless.

For an Alpha who is known for his indomitable courage, he can't find any to tell her how he really feels.

He sighs deeply, closes his eyes and summons what little courage he can find.



Collins Patrick



Author

“Thank you all for the love and support you have shown to this book, I don't take it for granted. I see the gems and the comments and I appreciate it all ♥

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