

## Chapter 50 – The Comfort

*"Sometimes, the best way to help someone is just to be near them." — Veronica Roth*

### ***Kiya – Later That Day***

After training ended for the day, I visited Mr. and Mrs. Dubois in their home. After what Kwame told me when he visited Garnet Moon, I made it a task to visit his parents. I was pulled into a bone-crushing hug by Mrs. Dubois who praised the Moon Goddess for protecting me with tears in her eyes. Even Mr. Dubois hugged me.

It felt strange, honestly. I wasn't used to receiving love from anyone in Zircon Moon, but the Dubois family held a special place in my heart. Because of their bravery, I am here today. My ashes would have been discarded somewhere, forever forgotten.

They were the only people I cared about, besides the children and a few of the other innocent pack members, and I will do all that I can to ensure their safety. They deserve the best for defying all orders from their Alpha to help a little girl.

Speaking of children, I will start training the newly shifted pups tomorrow morning and Adama is

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included! His parents entrust his safety to me, and I will honor that promise. To have the honor to train the future Gamma is reward enough. At twelve years old, I could sense the potential in him, and I will do my best to make him a strong wolf.

As I was heading back into the packhouse, Darien jogged up to me. He wasn't himself this morning and backed out on training today. The worry all of us had the night before came back at full force and I admit, I almost went against my word of not following him and demanding to know what was wrong with him. I felt relieved to see that he was willing to talk to me.

"Darien? What's the ma—"

"I need to speak to you. Now." His hand locked around my wrist in a tight grip, pulling me harshly towards the house. From his touch alone, I could sense the wave of emotions rushing through him.

Pain.

Anger.

Confusion.

Frustration.

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I ignored the lingering eyes of the surrounding wolves, curious to know what was wrong. We even passed by our friends, who raised an eyebrow at the both of us. Galen, of course, was munching on Darien's oreos. I pray to Selene that he doesn't get his ass whooped by Darien. We trotted up the stairs to the third floor, passing by my room and heading into his.

When we entered, Darien locked the door behind him and paced in circles. Quietly, I sat on the bed, watching him battle for control over his wolf. With his eyes flickering to black, I braced myself for the lingering possibility of things going awry.

"Darien?" I asked, worried. "What's going on?"

"I found my mate." He revealed.

My eyes widened. I fought to stop a smile from forming on my face. As happy as I was for him, there was something else to it. "Congratulations! I'm happy for—"

"She rejected me last night."

My heart skipped a beat. That explains why how he acted last night; angry and wanting to be alone. Darien was in pain. My heart wept powerfully for

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him. I wanted none of my friends to feel the pain of rejection, and it looked like fate fucked with the one person who deserved to have someone love him back. Getting rejected by the other half of your soul was a pain beyond understanding. It was as if someone ripped your pumping heart out from your chest and stomped on it.

Who would do this to such a great guy?

It wasn't long until the anger disappeared from his eyes, replaced with running tears. He sniffled, unable to hold back the roll of pain that entered his chest. "I didn't know what to do. She didn't even give me a chance. She outright rejected our bond and told me she deserves someone better and stronger, not a lowly Delta."

My anger punched away my sadness, making itself known. It was a lingering, boisterous devil in my body, and now, I was ready to let it out. What kind of selfish person did this? Darien may be a stoic and indifferent man, but he is the one person anyone would want by their side in battle. He protects all those he loves until his last breath, and his strength is unmatched. He has the potential to be an amazing Alpha if he was born with Alpha blood. And he was rejected all because of his status?

Whoever this heartless cur was, I swear I will end

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them. No one hurts my friend and gets away with it.

“How do you do it?” He suddenly asked me, forcing me out of my dark thoughts.

“Do what?”

“Deal with rejection.” Darien took a seat next to me. His bright eyes were puffy and red. Confusion was written all over his face, mingling with pain that was stabbing his soul every minute. I heard his wolf howling for his lost mate. “Am I not good enough for her? Does my status truly make me an incompetent mate?”

My heart wouldn't stop breaking. I felt like I was going to cry. I shook my head. “No. Anyone would have the honor of being your mate. You are an amazing person, Darien. Your rank does not define your worth to your soulmate.” I slumped against the bedframe, my shoulders dipping as my hands came to my face. “I don't know if I'm the best person to answer your rejection question. I accepted mine, severing the bond. I was rejected at the worst time of my life and I wanted to end the pain. I...I don't know, dude.”

His eyes cast down upon his lap, his shoulder shook from withheld sobs. “It's not fair. I waited my entire

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life, saving myself for my one and only, and she doesn't even want me. I don't know what to do, Kiya. It hurts to look at her smile. It hurts to be the one who can't give her the happiness she wanted."

"Who is she?"

"You knew her, I think. She's from this pack."

"Well, that narrows it down to about a hundred unmated she-wolves."

"She's mated to the Alpha. Who am I to think I could take what is his?"

I froze. Unblinking and unmoving. "What did you just say?"

Darien could detect the sudden change in my voice, his eyes shooting up to meet my brown. I could feel the flames of fury already combusting in my body, threatening to overflow. The devil wanted to be free. "I-I..."

"Your mate is Odessa?"

He nodded, slowly. I couldn't believe it. Darien and Odessa were destined mates. One of my good friends was destined to the malignant bitch who took

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pleasure in hurting me. The one who Neron chose over me. I began to question Selene's decision with mates.

The devil dances across my vision, holding something in his hands. This time showing a movie reel of the number of times Odessa hurt me. Pushing me down the stairs, tossing me in a tub full of hot water, hacking off chunks of my hair, calling me fat and worthless when I was mere bone, complaining to Jonathan and Neron to get them to hurt me, even forcing me to drink dirty toilet water. All of that coupled with how she hurt Darien ignited an uncontrollable conflagration in me.

I saw red. Hateful, gory red. I wanted revenge, not just for me, but for Darien. I wanted to kill Odessa. I wanted that bitch dead.

"Kiya. Your eyes are blue." I heard Darien's voice like a distant whisper.

Blue eyes. A telltale sign that my anger was winning, and my defenses were wavering. My powers functioned as an extension of my emotions, tangible enough for me to see and feel. If I was angry, it was angry. If I was happy, it was happy. If I want to cause pain, it will deliver. Now, I wanted nothing more, but Odessa's skull bashed into a corner edge of a table.

*I wanted her fucking blood!*

"Kiki, please." He whispered, embracing my quaking body. "Don't get angry on my behalf, please."

I wanted to pull myself out of his arms, to start my quest for vengeance. Was Darien going to lie down and take this? Is he just going to let this two-timing bitch walk all over him?

"She hurt you, Darien..." I reply in a strained whisper, the last of my defenses working hard to push back against my fury. "That's unacceptable."

"And I don't need you to take on that responsibility." He pulled me away from him, looking into my glowing blue eyes. "What goes on between my mate and I is none of your concern. It is my responsibility, so I will handle what happens. I'm a grown man, I don't need you to fight my battles for me."

Pieces of my anger crumbled, turning into dust upon impact. The devil whimpers and disappears in a mist of red. Soon enough, my anger was back to where it belonged, buried six feet under in the trenches of my mind. I felt the blaring heat in my body disappear, replaced with an unbearable chill. Darien cracked a small smile, one of his rare ones, and hugged me by my shoulders.

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"I know you care about me, Kiki," He soothed. "And I appreciate you wanting to fight on my behalf. You are a fighter, but you need not fight everything, hun."

"It's just not fair to you." I sniveled. "You don't deserve this. You deserve someone so much better, not her."

"Was she one of the people who hurt you back then?"

I nod. "And now she's hurting you. She's always been in love with Neron, even when we were kids. He called her his Luna. They've been together for a long time."

"But she is unmarked. So, she is not an official Luna."

"It doesn't change anything." I rub my face, expelling a deep, disappointed sigh. "What are you going to do?"

"Keep the faith." He smiles longingly. "I have hope that she will recognize our bond and we both will be together. She is my mate and I love her. I won't stop fighting for her."

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I close my eyes, thoughts circulating. Will Odessa learn to love Darien for the great man that he is? Doubt circulates in my mind as I sigh, rubbing my face with my palms. Every so often, I deeply hate the mate bond. The love between mates feels forced; they love without getting to know each other first. It made the wolves so susceptible to rejection and pain. Why was this a thing amongst werewolves?

Love shouldn't be freely given. Love should take time to develop, to blossom like the beautiful rose it was. <sup>2</sup>

But even roses have thorns.

"What do you want me to do?"

"Nothing." He answered. "You've done enough by listening to me and offering some insight. Neither I nor Sirius will accept the rejection of our bond. Odessa will come to us eventually, I know it."

I still have doubts, but I won't share them. Seeing the smile appear on my best friend's face is a reward enough.

"Will you tell the others?"

"In due time. But now, I am here to do my duty that

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Alpha Anthony gave us. All hope isn't lost, Kiki. But thank you for being here and being a good friend. Anyone willing to jump in and fight for them is a genuine friend."

Without a response, I hugged Darien again. He hugged me back tight, his chin on top of my hair. Odessa is crazy for rejecting him, and I hope to Selene that some sense hits her sooner or later, preferably sooner.

Wow. Darien and I were both rejected mates. No wonder Neron and Odessa were made for each other.

### Chapter Comments

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Visitor

I almost wish Darien would accept the rejection and he an...



Eva Yarbrough

she didn't want another mate. however, she may fall in love. ...



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