Chapter 131

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EPILOGUE

AMELIA

FIVE YEARS LATER

"Yay! Pancakes! Mum made pancakes!"

The excited shouts... or screeches were followed by the sound of running footsteps. I sincerely hoped they were not...

But of course they were, I thought in mild exasperation.

Lily and Liam came racing towards me on their little feet, their eyes much like Damian's, fixed on the plate of pancakes I held.

"Hey! Please slow down, guys," I called when Lily, still running, looked over her shoulder and screeched excitedly when she saw Damian. Damian was chasing them with Liam's favourite stuffed animal.

"Slow down! Slow down!" I called more loudly as the twins approached me. "You'll hurt yourself if you keep running around!"

At the same time, they got to me and clutched my dress, giggling. I glared at Damian, who gave me a boyish, unrepentant grin.

"Liam! Lily!" I said, turning my attention back to my kids. "How many times have I told you to stop running in the house? And Damian-"

"Yes, sweetheart?"

"You are supposed to stop them from running around. How come you're the one encouraging them?"

"I like it when Daddy chases us in the house," Liam said with a grin. It's fun."

Damian laughed. I laughed, too; I couldn't help it, even though I did my best to look stern.

"Okay, honey," Damian said when the laughter had died down. "I will stop chasing these cuties around the house." He moved close and placed a hand on my bulging stomach. "We'll have to stop soon anyway when the baby comes."

Lily's eyes widened in wonder, as they always did whenever there was a mention of the baby I was just expecting.

"Is the baby growing in mummy's tummy?" she asked.

"Oh yes, sweetie. Your little brother is growing in there, all nice and comfy. Now, why don't you, too, run along to continue eating?"

They didn't need to be told twice. They ran back the way they came.

"Hey!" Damian called after them. "I didn't mean for you to run literally. You two can actually walk, you know."

But they paid him no mind. A second later, they were out of sight.

"Nice going... dad," I said dryly.

He shrugged. "You can't blame me."

"Here, honey. For you." I handed him the plate of pancakes.

He took it, dropped it on the table and grabbed my waist.

"Give me you instead," he murmured.

"No," I said with a laugh. "I'm too tired for this, Damian. I need to rest."

"You can rest, but... the condition for that is that you give me a big kiss."

"Just a kiss?"

For an answer, he puckered his lips at me and closed his eyes. With a chuckle, I kissed him and pulled away when he showed signs of wanting more.

"Oh no, you don't, Romeo. You have to go and tend to the lawn before Queenie and Anton get here."

"You worry too much. They won't be here for another hour or two, so I have time." He stepped closer. "Lots of time to-"

"Helloooo everyone. Who's home?"

That loud, cheery voice was unmistakably Queenie's. Damian and I exchanged a look of surprise. Queenie and Anton were actually not supposed to arrive for at least another hour.

The kids, hopping, skipping, and laughing, reached Anton and Queenie before us. Queenie scooped them both up.

"Well, look at you two adorable," Queenie cried. You have both grown so much."

"Especially Liam. He's almost as tall as me now," said Anton, ruffling Lily's and Liam's hair.

"That's not true," Lily said with a giggle.

And then a little squabble ensued between Lily and her brother over who was taller.

When the twins squirmed out of Queenie's arms to inspect the bags of toys she had brought for them, Queenie rushed forward, her arms outstretched.

"I missed you, Queenie," I said, giving her a side hug.

"I missed you too and er- someone can't even give a proper hug these days," she teased.

"Yeah. Look at my stomach. I can't manage one. Not in this state."

"Uh-huh. I can see that. It looks like you'll even give birth soon." Slipping an arm around my waist, she turned to Damian, who was exchanging pleasantries with Anton. You really have to calm down, Damian. If you keep getting her pregnant like this, you'll soon have a full house."

We all chuckled, and our attention was once again drawn to the kids trying to get the toys out of the bags.

"Hold on. I'll help with that," Queenie said. She squatted between them to unbox the toys.

I heaved a deep sigh. "More toys. The drum set you got them put me through a lot. Even when I slept, I could still hear those drums banging in my head."

"Ha ha. I know already. You told me like a thousand times, remember? This time, I planned for that."

After Queenie handed the toys to the kids, Damian led the way to the inner sitting room.

Anton looked puzzled as he looked around. "I thought the sitting room was that other way."

"It was, but not anymore," Damian explained. "I gradually converted that room to the kid's semi-outdoor room. You know how they love to play with dirt a lot. I figured it was better they got that room to play in since it's not close to other rooms where they can end up dirtying bedsheets."

"Good idea," Anton said with amusement. "Daddy Damian is really doing good."

Damian rolled his eyes, "You're just jealous."

While we settled down, Damian went off to get drinks for Anton and Queenie.

"So Anton and I have an announcement to make," Queenie said excitedly when we were done with the usual chitchat about their trip. "After many years of travelling worldwide, helping those in need and all, we have decided to settle down."

After a second of surprise, Damian and I burst into spontaneous applause.

"I'm so happy for you," Damian and I gushed, then laughed at the realization that we had said the same thing at the exact same time.

"Queenie, this is wonderful news," I said. "Where's your ring? How come I didn't see it?"

"Safely tucked into her purse," said Anton. "We didn't want to spoil the surprise for you two."

"Oh-oh." Queenie cocked her head towards the door. "Sounds like there's trouble."

Moments later, Lily, in tears, ran straight to Damian.

"What's the matter, sweetie?" Damian said softly, dropping to one knee before her.

"It's Liam," Lily wailed. "He took my toy. He doesn't want to give it back. I want my teddy!"

Damian sighed. "Excuse me, guys, while I sort this out."

"Sure thing, bro." Anton tipped his glass toward Damian.

Damian managed to quiet her down before they got to the door.

"How come Lily went to Damian first instead of you?" Queenie asked. "Damian hasn't stolen away all your charm, has he?"

"Ah, well. If it's for my kids, then I don't mind. Damian has a way with them. The way he loves them is totally mind-blowing. Whenever I imagined raising children, there wasn't a time I thought I would never be the favourite parent, but then I don't really blame the kids. I would gravitate towards Damian, too, if I were in their shoes."

"My friend, is that a good dad, huh?" Anton said.

I nodded. "It's like he was made for fatherhood. He is more patient with the kids than I'll ever be."

"I'm here!" Damian announced as he swept into the room, carrying a twin in each arm. He mimed arming sweat off his brow. "Can you believe these two didn't want me to leave? They insisted on coming here with me."

He flopped onto the sofa, and the twins proceeded to take turns tickling and poking him for fun, screaming with laughter whenever he winced dramatically for their benefit.

"Hey, Damian," Anton started. "Have you heard about Noah's company about to be demolished?"

Damian sat up. "No, I barely know what's happening at that end. It's going to be demolished?"

"It is. Someone bought the place at a really cheap price. The buyer plans to tear it down and build an entertainment centre in its place."

"Hmm. I'll say good luck with that, though luck doesn't really come into it. That entertainment center is going to be a bad investment because Wonderworld will certainly send them out of business. If there is one business in this city that won't die, it's my wife's park." He leaned back with a relaxed sigh. It's so successful that I may decide whenever I want to resign and be a stay-at-home dad."

I laughed. "You sound just like my mother. She keeps bragging to everyone who cares to listen that her daughter... wait for it... owns the park!"

Anton, Damian and Queenie choked on laughter.

"I totally believe that," Anton said. "Amelia, your mum and her husband visit the park more than some kids do."

"Daddy, can we go to the park?" Lily suddenly asked.

"Yes, Dad. Can we? Can we?" Liam added.

"Oh, oh," Queenie said in a low whisper. "Who mentioned the park in the first place?"

"Don't look at me," Anton responded with a grin at Damian, who was trying to keep up with two persistent kids who kept begging to be taken to the park and showed no signs of letting up.

"Okay. Okay. I surrender," Damian said, chuckling. "I'll take you two to the park tomorrow."

"Yay!" the kids screamed in unison, pulling themselves into his lap for a hug.

A smile curved my lips as I watched Damian with the kids. Life, I thought, had indeed worked out.

****

Dearest gentle readers, thank you for taking your time to read my book, for loving this story and sticking with me till the end. Your feedback and encouragement have been overwhelming and inspiring. Knowing that many of you bought my book is a tremendous honor, and it fuels my passion to continue writing.

I initially wanted to extend this book but many of you wanted me to complete it. I initially wanted to include Anton's story with Queenie in this book but after reading your comments, I realized it's better to go with your wishes. After all, you all have been my greatest supporters.

I know many of you expressed your dislike for some of my characters and for a relatively new writer, it almost made me give up sometimes. Writing this book toiled with my emotions several times especially when I read your comments and they are not positive. Truly, I feel like most of you contributed to this book more than you think.

I would have loved for book 2 to be about some of the characters in the book but I decided to give you fresh characters. I've read all your comments, noted all the complaints and have poured all that into my next book.

I am thrilled to announce that "The Unwanted Wife: Arranged To The Cursed Alpha", is on the horizon. In this new tale, you'll find amazing characters with deep chemistry. It's a werewolf romance book but I promise you, it's not the usual story you read every time. Our female lead, Alana, is feisty and passionate. I can't wait for you all to read about her because I've never written about a character I love so much. The male lead, Darius, is just as stubborn as Damian. But there's a twist. He is everything a woman would want, only if he manages to communicate with Alana who is dying to figure him out like a puzzle. I can't wait for you to meet the new characters and explore the worlds I've created.

I'll be leaving the blurb and a few excerpts from the book. If you want to be notified on the release date, please follow me and check my page often for updates.

BLURB:

A curse. A feisty mate. An unwanted wife. And a whole lot of steamy interactions.

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Darius Dawson might not be the devil, but being married to him is Alana's idea of hell. He is the last person she expects to be her mate, but a forced marriage brings them together. She loathes him for everything he is and for the wall he erects between them.

Darius has only one problem: his mate and new wife. She's feisty, blunt, and completely irresistible. He wants to kiss her, but he can't. He needs to touch her, but he shouldn't. It's time to break his curse and f*ck his wife-but one at a time.

EXCERPTS

ALANA

He is my mate and for some reason, I don't feel happy to know that he is my mate.

I feel trapped. A bride shouldn't feel trapped on her wedding day, should she? After all, it's supposed to be the happiest day of my life.

Yet, I know nothing about my husband.

He would not speak to me, hell, he wouldn't even glance at me. He scrambled away when he felt the mate bond with nothing but a glance of disappointment at me. Didn't he approve of me?

I turned to the maids who were scurrying around to get me dressed. "Tell me about him."

They froze and turned to me. "About who, my princess?"

"Him," I threw the butterfly clip on my hair against the wall. "Darius. He will be my husband soon and I don't know anything about him. Why?"

"He is a wonderful man!" The first maid exclaimed.

"Yes. And he's the Alpha." Another added.

"You'll be Luna." The third said.

I knew that. I knew all that. But I did not know a thing about my husband-the man everyone called the dark one, the man I was doomed to love.

****

ALANA

Darius' mother, Elizabeth, stared at me, her eyes raking me from hair to toe in my wedding dress. Then she coughed and nodded in approval.

"You look fine," she uttered.

"Tha-"

"But in this marriage, you must do better than fine." She stated firmly, cutting me off. "I selected you for a reason."

When she noticed the constipated look on my face, she tilted her head. "You are aware I selected you, aren't you?"

Although I had a thousand things to say and a thousand more to scream at her, I simply nodded. "Yes."

"Good," she smiled and walked around me slowly. "My son doesn't like you. He might even hate you just like the other girls I've attempted to match with him. But you must convince him to accept you because he needs an heir. The council members are talking and if you're not able to bear a son in a year, Darius will face opposition from them. That is the real reason he has agreed to marry you. That is the reason you're here."

"What if he doesn't love me?" I asked in a timid voice.

Her eyes widened slowly like I had suddenly sprouted a second head, then her lips curved into a small smile. "Love? You're not here for love, child." She said that like love was a despicable thing, a disease that could kill her precious son. "You're here to fill up your womb with babies, to preserve my son's legacy. Love is the last thing you should worry about."

****

ALANA

"Darius!!" I screamed, running after him as fast as my long wedding dress could allow me. "Stop walking away from me. Darius!"

He paused in his tracks at once, his shoulders rigid and held up high. His bodyguards were the first to react as they turned and made to come after me.

"Leave us," Darius told them in a thick voice. I'd barely heard him speak and thus, goosebumps masked my skin at the sound of his voice.

The guards scurried away and he slowly turned to me, his glasses still perched over his eyes. What kind of man wears sunglasses to his own wedding and doesn't take them off for even a second?

"What do you want, Alana?" He asked.

"What do I want?" I scoffed. "I should ask you that. What do you want from me? Why do you marry me and condemn me to a life of misery?"

"Many women would do anything to be in your shoes," he answered dryly.

"I'm not those women," I inched towards him, my heart thumping in my chest. "You're my mate. I felt it yesterday and I know you did too. So why are you treating me like this? Why is my room at the other end of the estate? Why do I feel like I've just married a stone, not a man? Answer me because I'm now your Luna, your equal, and I swear to the goddess, I'm not those girls who used to warm your bed and cower away at the sound of your voice!"

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DARIUS

"She sure is fiesty, I'll give her that," I muttered to myself, marvelling at how she was able to stand her ground against me. Recalling her defiant stance despite her small frame and the twitching of her lips as she demanded an explanation from me, made me laugh even more.

Alana was just as amusing as she was interesting. She was full of surprises, as I had come to learn. What woman had ever rendered me speechless? None at all, with the exception of Alana Cruz.

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ALANA

"I wouldn't be here if I didn't want you, Alana," he said.

Maybe it was the desire in his eyes. Maybe it was the crack in his voice as he spoke. Maybe it was the way he called my name. But that single sentence lit my entire body aflame. And that was enough. I surrendered myself completely.

I almost could not think straight when his fingers trailed up and down my body. Tracing every line, every curve, electrifying all the nerves inside me. The ones that wanted so badly to have every inch of Darius merged into me.

A low moan slipped from my throat as his hands found their way to my breasts. He squeezed them, yanking my top off and tossing it to the floor.

With one hand squeezing my breast, the other slid into my skirt and moved my panties aside, sliding two fingers into my wet pussy. My mouth fell open as the moans erupted from the pit of my stomach, and once he began to pump his fingers in and out, I held onto him for dear life.

"You like that?" He whispered, varying the tempo from slow to fast.

I threw my head back. "Y-Yes…" I moaned loudly. "P-Please…don't s-stop…"

****

ALANA

"What are you saying?"

I swallowed, hope bubbling in my chest. "Darius, I am asking you to mark me."

I don't know what I was expecting, but it definitely wasn't for Darius to practically leap from the bed. His sharp movement pushed my head to the side aggressively, almost making me lose my balance. Shocked, I looked up to see him picking his clothes off the floor.

"Are you leaving? I-I don't understand. What did I say wrong?"

But he ignored my words. Hastily, he threw on his clothes and bounded out of the room.

"Wait, Dariu-"

But he had already banged the door behind him. I shrank into the bed, my heart pounding and my eyes wide in confusion.

What did I say to get him so upset?

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I believe this is the all excerpt I can spare. Thank you once again for being part of my journey. Your support means everything to me, and I am eager to share more stories with you in the future.