

Alpha's curvy bullied human mate

Chapter 51: When you knew I was yours

Nathaniel

My immediate instinct was to secure the area and prevent her from running away. I was painfully aware that I had failed her in the worst possible way. It had happened – exactly as she had foreseen, as she had feared.

Fleeting memories resurfaced of how the pack treated her, a young girl forced into servitude without complaint. How could I have been such a fool?

“Penelope?” The house was silent and dark.

Recollections flooded my mind of when we prepared this place for her arrival, filled with illusions of her potential happiness here.

“Penelope... I just want to talk, please,” I said.

Following her scent, I found her in the room meant for the two of us. She was curled up in bed with a blanket, and I could see she'd been crying.

“Mate was in pain,” Hunter said, his nervousness evident.

“I'm so sorry about what happened. I thought it would be different,” I said, but she didn't answer.

“Please talk to me, even if it's just to yell at me. I'd rather do almost anything than see you like this. Believe me, it was never my intention. I had other plans,” I pleaded. She slowly turned to look at me, her eyes red and swollen, her mouth trembling.

“That's the problem, Nate... you planned to have me greeted by the same people who bullied me. You thought that rounding up my abusers and forcing them to accept me would be the solution.”

“Do you know why this happened? Because you have no idea what I've been through here. You act like I just must forget everything... but the horrors I've been through here...” she said, and my heart pounds.

“I was treated like trash. They didn't just yell things at me, and I swear that was the least of it – the jokes, the nicknames they think are funny. That was what you saw, what you witnessed, but other things happened.”

“I was forced to clean places in the pack that they would dirty again just so I could clean them again. I was taken away from my cleaning tools and often had to clean dirt and debris with my own bare hands. I broke my hands, my skin dried out, and I had wounds that took a long time to heal. Girls pulled my hair when I walked by, and many of your friends kicked me and wouldn't let me get up to see how weak I was,” she said, tears in her eyes.

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I was horrified. I didn't know if I knew. I didn't know if, at some point, I knew and decided to forget... because it was always easier to pretend it didn't happen. But what I was very sure of, was that I had done absolutely nothing to stop it.

“And do you know what they did when you kicked me out of the herd? They burned my things. When I left alone, I put on what I had on and heard my brothers screaming in the distance; I didn't even get to say goodbye to them that night. I walked alone, afraid, on foot, in the fear of the forest. The wolves... they kept me company in the shadows, so I always looked out for them,” she said, and Hunter howled.

“When I came to the town, Jack helped me and gave me everything, and my grandmother took me in. And without them... I honestly don't know if I would have survived. I could have died on the road or ended up on the streets... and you wouldn't have had a mate,” she said, and I could feel a lump in my throat.

“Penelope... I screwed up a thousand times... I don't know how to ask for your forgiveness anymore,” I said, practically broken.

“I told you this would happen! That they would despise me, and you would hide me!” she said in despair.

“No Penelope... I didn't hide you! I was just trying to protect you!”

“Don't deny it, Nate! You didn't want anyone to know I was here! Not even your father knew I was your mate! You were ashamed of me! You left me alone all these days... you didn't want anyone to know you were with me,” she shouted. I stepped closer and looked into her eyes like a man who was afraid of losing everything in a minute.

“You have to believe me, my love, it was all for your protection. I wanted everything to be okay before you arrived, I wanted everything to be perfect for you, and I wanted to introduce you little by little,” I said, taking her cheeks. She pulled away, breaking the contact, and I could feel my hands hurting from not touching her.

“And I guess you also hid the fact that I was your mate at first to protect me, didn't you?”

“I... I never meant to...”

“Don't lie to me. In the beginning, when you found out that I was your mate... you didn't even know about the problems with Marco. Even after meeting me, you were still friends with him! Your most important ally!”

“I didn't know, Penelope, I could never imagine what he was involved in...”

“Tell me what you felt when you saw me. Tell me what you thought when you found out I was your mate,” she asked me, and I felt like I was digging my own grave.

“My love, please...”

“Tell me, Nate. I didn't know what it was like... until Naomi found Andrew, and I saw the happiness that emanated from her. She didn't care who he was, she just wanted to know his name and meet him,” she said, crying in such a desperate way that I was about to cry as I felt the pain in her heart deep inside of me.

“She... she told me that it was the happiest day of her life, that from the moment she touched him and saw him, she couldn't get away from him,” she said.

“Tell me what you felt?” I couldn't lie to her, but I couldn't tell her the truth either. It would tear us both apart.

“I felt a smell, your perfume... it was delicious, like strawberries, and I thought it was from someone I had never met,” I said, swallowing saliva.

“I heard your voice, and I thought I had never heard anything more wonderful in my whole life, and when I saw you and came close to you... I had to hold my breath because you looked more and more beautiful to me,” I told her, and she looked at me with hopeful eyes.

“You let Marco humiliate me all day long; you were ashamed to say that I was your mate, ashamed of what your friends might say... Is that true?” she asked breathlessly.

“Penelope, I was afraid that if the others knew, they might attack you... Marco was already badmouthing humans, and I needed to be sure this was real... because...”

“You doubted that a mere human could be the mate of a great Alpha? You thought about rejecting me, didn't you? When I told you about rejecting me... you had already thought about it,” she said, and my soul fell to the ground.

“No, Penelope, please don't say that!”

“Tell me, please tell me the truth, I'd rather know the truth than continue to live a lie...” she begged me.

“I implore you, my love...”

“Tell me! Please!” she cried desperately, and I felt like I was losing my mind.

“I thought about it! Okay?! But the moment I got close to you, it was impossible. From the moment I found you in the bathroom, I couldn't walk away from you. I didn't want to walk away from you!” I told her the truth, and she looked at me like I stabbed her in the heart.

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“And Hunter wouldn't let you, right? Your wolf begged you to find me, and then you made up a trail of lies to stay with me, you tricked me by visiting me with your wolf, you brought me here knowing I would suffer...” she said, and I was shaking in despair.

“I am willing to do whatever it takes to make up for all of this, Penelope. I will spend every day of my life looking for you to forgive me, I would do everything to be the mate you deserve.”

“I don't want to see you. I don't want to see you again,” she said flatly, lowering her head in an expression of deep disappointment and sadness.

“My love...”

“I know you are the Alpha, and this is your pack. But all I ask is that you leave me alone. I never want to see you again, and I don't know if I will ever be able to see you again.”

“Penelope! I would rather give up everything! All this, for you!” I pleaded, dropping to my knees on the floor.

“Please leave me alone,” she said, and my wolf howled, crying, and I had never felt him cry before.

“I can't...” I pleaded with a broken heart. I had been a bastard, and I had paid dearly for it.

“Hunter. Tell him to leave me alone, get him away from me. He hurts me, I can't be near him,” she said directly to my wolf. Of course, he agreed because he was completely hers — she was his boss and mistress.

I stood up shaking, feeling again how I was rejected. I had thought about rejecting her, and that was my sin. And as I left, she spoke to me without looking at me.

“And don't worry, I won't run away. I know you need me to be strong and to protect everyone. To make you the powerful Alpha you so want to be,” she said, implying that I only wanted her for that. When I wanted to answer her, Hunter spoke to me.

“Go, don't make mate suffer anymore. I can feel how her heart breaks.”

And I stumbled away on the road. I could see Naomi in her wolf form lying on the ground, sobbing for her Luna.

I could feel my soul shattering. I... I didn't know how I was going to get through this.