

Chapter Sixteen: The Web We Weave

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Phera POV:

After leaving the patch of serenity that was the park, I finally reached home—a modest two-story house not far from the heart of the city. The moment I stepped inside, the absence of noise felt like a void, drawing me into its emptiness. It was as if the walls themselves were closing in on me, like they, too, felt the gravity of the decisions that loomed large in my life.

I went straight to my bedroom, tossing my purse on the dresser. The mirror reflected a visage of contradictions: eyes filled with courage but lined with weariness, lips that had known love but remained sealed with secrets. Without another thought, I changed into my pyjamas and plunged into the bed that had become a battlefield of emotions.

The world around me dissolved into shadows as I closed my eyes, but sleep eluded me like a cruel tease. My mind played the day's events on a loop, each scene starring Axel, Damon, and Zane. Towering figures, they were—each one standing at 6'6", with thick, dark hair that held streaks of light, like whispers from the moon. Their eyes, a tempestuous gray, were worlds unto themselves, filled with storms and calm in equal measure. Broad-chested and

powerfully built, they seemed like gods amongst men, yet so innately human in their vulnerabilities.

The scent of each man floated through my consciousness—Damon with his cedar and musk, like an ancient forest brought to life; Axel, the refreshing aroma of pine fused with musk, as if embodying the spirit of untamed wilderness; and Zane, whose scent of fresh grass melded with musk, painting a landscape of rolling hills and open skies in my mind.

The night turned into a restless symphony of tossing and turning until, finally, the first rays of the sun streamed through the curtains, heralding a new day. With a groan, I dragged myself out of bed and went through the motions of preparing for work. The shower did little to wash away the turmoil that clung to my skin like invisible tattoos. As I stood in front of my closet, even choosing an outfit felt like a decision too heavy to bear. That's when my phone buzzed—a message from Betty and Reese—my lifelines. 1

'Morning, sunshine! Coffee? ☕'

Betty's text read. Reese followed up with,

'Yeah, and spill the tea. We need our daily drama!'

We had been friends since our childhood days in the Red Moon Pack, and though life had hurled us in different directions, our friendship remained as solid as ever.

I quickly typed a response:

'Morning! I need both coffee and to spill some serious tea. Facetime in an hour?'

Fifteen minutes later, their yeas popped up on my screen. Somehow, just knowing I'd see them soon lightened the weight on my shoulders, even if it was through a screen. I dressed in a simple but elegant blouse and skirt, something that screamed 'business casual' yet feminine. Slipping on low heels and applying minimal makeup, I grabbed my purse and left for the café down the street.

As soon as I walked in, the aroma of freshly brewed coffee filled the air, a comforting scent that felt like a warm hug. I spotted a cozy corner on the side, ordered my cappuccino, and Facetimed my girlies.

'Girl, you look like you've seen a ghost. Spill, spill, spill!'

Betty exclaimed, her eyes wide and filled with concern.

Reese chimed in,

Yeah, you have that 'I've got a story' look.'


Taking a deep breath, I began to recount everything that had happened the day before, from the tension-filled meeting in the triplets' office in ADZ Corp's skyscraper to the emotional whirlpool that had engulfed me ever since. I poured my heart out, describing Axel, Damon, and Zane, not just as leaders of a business empire but as men who were intrinsically bound to my soul. Their body language, their

tone, the subtle hints of vulnerability—every detail was laid bare for my friends to dissect.

After what felt like an eternity, I finally stopped talking, drained but also relieved. Betty looked at Reese, then back at me, her eyes softening as she spoke.

'Love is messy, Phera. But it's also beautiful in its chaos. They are your mates, bound by the fates, and by a love that's been written in the stars. It's never going to be easy, but perhaps the universe brought you all together, at this point in time, for a reason.'

Reese nodded, adding,

'And remember, even in a world as complicated as ours, with corporate empires and pack alliances, the heart wants what it wants. Maybe it's time to listen to yours.' 

Their words hung in the air, like the final note of a poignant melody. I took a sip of my coffee, letting the bitterness meld with the sweetness on my tongue, much like the life decisions I was trying to navigate. The road ahead was fraught with challenges, but at that moment, surrounded by friendship and steeped in shared history, it felt just a little bit easier.

And so, as I sat there, contemplating the tangle of emotions, responsibilities, and relationships that had become my life, I realized that the story was far from over. In fact, a new chapter was just beginning.

The digital clock on my phone flashed 10:32 a.m., but the numbers meant little to me. My emotions were like a storm inside, tearing at my thoughts. I took a deep breath before diving into the maelstrom.

"You know, it's not just about the concept of love or what I feel for them. It's about these deep-rooted fears that have been gnawing at me for years."

Betty and Reese exchanged an anxious look over FaceTime, leaning closer to their respective screens as if by doing so, they could lend me their physical presence and strength.

"Go on," Reese's voice was a soft nudge.

"It's about that night, eight years ago. You guys know," my voice trembled as I delved into the haunting memories. "They kissed my sister—my sister—while I stood there, on the other side of that glass door, peering through the curtains, feeling like my heart was being yanked out of my chest." 2

I paused, swallowing hard to push down the lump that had formed in my throat.

"It wasn't just a fleeting kiss, you know? It was deliberate, passionate. I could see the way their eyes locked onto hers, the way their lips met. And the worst part? They knew I was watching." 3

My breaths were shallow and quick, as if the years had crystallized into that one moment, choking me.

"I felt like a fool. They chose that night, that moment, to shatter me. And what's worse? They had already known I was their fated mate. They knew it and still chose to go through with that. So, you tell me, how am I not supposed to be scared?"

My words hung in the air like the aftermath of a tempest, heavy and charged with a cocktail of raw emotions—fear, hurt, and deep-rooted insecurity.

"And then there's my sister, always the golden child, always in the spotlight. Gorgeous, popular, confident, a complete antithesis of me,"

I continued, my voice tinged with bitterness.

"Why did they kiss her, not me? Every time I look in the mirror, every time I compare myself to her, that memory is like a ghost, telling me I'm not enough, that I'll never be enough."

Betty shook her head, her eyes brimming with sympathy.

"Phera, your fears are valid. I mean, who wouldn't be scared? But remember, their past actions don't define your future. You need answers, and you deserve them."

"I get that," I whispered, my gaze dropping to my trembling hands in my lap. "But their reputations precede them. I've heard the stories, hell I've seen them, the whispers about their womanizing ways. What makes me different? What if

they just add me to their list and move on?" 1

"It's like I'm about to walk through a minefield," I concluded, my voice almost a whisper. "Except, I'm walking through it blindfolded and barefoot, scared that at any moment, everything could explode."

Reese nodded, her eyes almost glassy,

"You're never alone, Phera. And remember, you're not walking through that minefield by yourself. We're here, even if only in spirit, walking it with you."

"Your fears, your insecurities, they're a part of you, but they're not all of you," Betty added solemnly. "This is a chapter in your life, but remember, you're the one holding the pen. You have the power to write it the way you want to, to seek the answers you need."

I nodded slowly, my emotions a jumble of apprehension and a newfound determination. Betty and Reese were right. As daunting as it was, I couldn't let my past fears dictate my future.

But even as I hung up the call, their uplifting words echoing in my mind, my fears still loomed large—monsters lurking in the dark corners of my thoughts. Yet, the time for confronting those monsters, as terrifying as they were, had inevitably come. And so, I braced myself, for what was to come would either break me or shape me.