

REJECTED: CLAIMED BY THE ALPHA MAFIA

GHOST DAHILA

Kiara:

I gulp when I hear him say that. How could he want to lock me up in this place forever? This is beyond cruel.

"Why don't you just kill me for real?" I question, and he chuckles.

"What fun would that be? I've kept you this far and every single moment, I come up with ideas on how we can keep having fun," he says, and I scoff.

He caresses my cheek gently while I stare at him, wishing I could chop his hand off.

"Where is Ariana?" I ask.

"On a brief trip to the airport with my men, and the loving doctor who helped you. Did I tell you I'm a philanthropist and he will be getting a room at the mansion?"

The sarcasm in his voice is irritating.

"Yes, if that's another word for murderer," I say to him, and he laughs.

"I like your sense of humor, but that will get you nowhere, my love," he says, tapping my nose gently before standing up.

"Even if I tried to be nice, you do not deserve it. I hate you and the day you die will be my happiest," I spit.

"Everyone has what they wish for. Like me, I wish your entire pack would go into exile, but they can't yet, so," he says, and then he reaches for his pocket. "But one thing I know you can wish for but won't have is the cure." He waves the tiny bottle of clear liquid in my face, and I gasp, my eyes widening.

Bailey growls, and I try to calm her down. This is what he wants-for me to beg him like a slave-but I won't do that because I know he won't hand it over to me.

"Even if you begged, you wouldn't have it, because I have sworn to make you suffer, Kiara," he says, and then he turns to leave.

"See you tomorrow, and don't bother leaving this house because you'll get burned badly," he says, and then he walks away while I lie helplessly, staring at the bracelet on my wrist.

When he shuts the door, I close my eyes, not wanting to think about my current situation.

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The next time I wake up, it's to a rumbling tummy. My belly aches badly because I'm hungry.

"Ariana!" I call out, but the echo reminds me I'm alone. I open my eyes and stare at the bracelet on my wrist. I slowly get out of bed, but then I find myself on the floor due to how weak my leg is. This tears the stitches on my bad hand, causing it to bleed.

"Fuck!" I groan as the pain bites deep down my spine.

I take controlled breaths, trying to calm myself down, but when I sit on my butt and see how much I'm bleeding, I lose it.

The stitches on my hand are torn, and pus keeps oozing out with blood.

"Do not panic, Kiara," I say to myself, grabbing the tiles on the floor as I painfully drag myself across the room.

I know I have a bracelet which won't let me escape, but I try to be delusional at least to get to the door. When I do, I reach for the handle and open it to see the entire compound is bare, but filled with a lot of flowers and a tall fence.

I crawl on the rocky ground, bruising my body until I get to the front of a couple of flowers, where my strength is exhausted. I'm exhausted, but I have to keep going because I need something to wipe off the blood, and I can't crawl back to the room, which is far away.

I pant heavily, feeling like I'm going to give up the ghost. Left with nothing and no one, I pluck a random leaf and place it on my arm before I pass out.

The next time I open my eyes, I see that it's nighttime. I jump up at once, and the leaf I placed earlier falls off. I notice my legs are steady and I feel stronger than ever, which is strange.

My eyes widen as I see that the bleeding spot on my hand is partially healed. The wound is almost closed.

"That's weird," I say out loud, staring at the wound and the leaf.

I pick the leaf from the ground and stare at it for a while, then it clicks. I take in my surroundings at once to see that I'm in a garden-like cottage with trees and flowers scattered around.

A healer must have lived here, I reason, plucking the flower the leaf came from and recognizing it at once.

It's Ghost Dahlia, a rare flower with healing powers. It's said to be extinct, so what is it doing here?

I pluck the dead-like flower, which blossoms into a beautiful yellow flower in my hands. Legend says it only blossoms for the pure-hearted, which warms my heart.

"The moon goddess has come to our aid, and you must save me with the flower," Bailey says, and I feel a pang in my chest. "I do not know how much time I have left, and the potion you took is just temporary," she adds.

I grab as many flowers as I can, then I walk back inside. At first, I'm confused about what to do, but when I get in and look around, the cottage is a serene sanctuary with soft fur rugs, a gentle fire warming the hearth, and subtle hints of nature's magic woven into the very fabric of every corner. Then it dawns on me this cottage actually belonged to a healer or a witch. I place the flowers on the table in the living area, then I try to study my surroundings.

"There must be a clue somewhere," I say to myself, walking around the rooms in the house.

After hours of searching, my journey seems to be futile, causing me to slump onto one couch.

"I might as well just be dead," I groan, lazily throwing back my arm over the side table close by.

My hand hits a lamp, but instead of knocking it down, the cap just bends backward, and the shelf in the room shifts to reveal a door.