

Chapter 49

The bed felt so comfortable that Ava snuggled in further when she slowly started to wake. She couldn't remember the last time she slept so well. It felt like she'd been hit with a dose of magic to get rid of all her tiredness and worry.

She wriggled a little more under the covers. And then froze.

She opened her eyes, which widened when she saw the unfamiliar room in the early morning light. And that meant the warm, hard wall that was currently spooning her was indeed another person.

Her heart pounded out of her chest as she shot out of the bed and turned around, and then horror filled her when she realized she was standing in front of Ezekiel with no top on. She covered herself quickly.

Why was she in his bed?

Ezekiel was leaning on his elbow as if he had been watching her sleep. As if he had let her wriggle against him on purpose. With his hair tousled and his shirtless chest exposed, he took her breath away. If there was ever a person blessed by the Goddess it was this man. Every inch of

him seemed to have been molded when she had been in a very generous mood.

With great difficulty, she ripped her eyes away from that perfection to meet the amber gaze.

“Why was I in your bed?” she asked, her voice shaky.

“Because you’re safer right next to me.” Ezekiel answered.

His voice was husky with sleep, and it did things to her insides that weakened her knees. What was it with this man?

His words slowly penetrated her heated brain.

Safer?

Everything came rushing back to her. Her heart hammered again as she moved her arms from her bra to inspect her torso. There was absolutely nothing, not even a scratch. The only evidence there was that she wasn’t imagining things were the traces of blood that someone had wiped from her skin and the splashes on her bra.

Claire had really done it. She had shifted and tried to kill her in front of witnesses,

All because what Her boyfriend had been making advances on her?

She covered herself again and met Ezekiel's gaze head on, not even bothering to pretend she was submissive in any way. This was all his fault.

"That's not what I asked. Why was I in your bed?" she repeated coldly.

"I already answered that question, Ava. Unless you wanted to sleep down the hall in the guest room, in a house that Claire probably knows better than I do because she was always here."

Was. He said was. Had he dumped Claire, then? She didn't want to feel anything about that, but she couldn't help the intense rush of satisfaction that filled her body.

"Now, are you going to answer my question?" Ezekiel said. "How do you heal so quickly? You almost died last night, but here you are, asking why you're alive."

Hearing him say it out loud weakened her limbs. She took a breath and sat on the edge of the bed as it hit her all over again.

She'd been prepared to die last night. Claire's eyes. The lured in them was something she would never forget, Claire would have ripped her apart. She would never have seen her family again.

How had she survived that? Jared's cream couldn't be that strong.

"I don't know," she whispered.

As much as she hadn't liked Jared's surprise party last night she didn't want to drop his name into the messy situation when she didn't understand how his cream worked in the first place.

The sun started rising on another day at the academy, and her heart grew cold at the thought of going out there again. Where was Claire now? The last thing she remembered was the really huge thing, too big to be a wolf, that had attacked Claire and stopped her—the huge creature with red eyes.

Her eyes widened as she turned to look at Ezekiel.

“Claire... Is she...?”

“She'll be out there waiting to get you alone again. It's probably safer for you to stay here until I deal with her.”

Stay with Ezekiel? When she knew she turned into a senseless idiot around him? That wasn't going to happen. And how was he going to deal with Claire, anyway? If she had been bold enough to attack her like that when the school was so big on its rules, she would do it no matter what Ezekiel said.

Once again, she lamented her lack of bruises because she wouldn't have a leg to stand on if she went to report Claire for what she had done.

“I have to get to the kitchen. I'm already late setting off,” she said as she stood up from the bed.

“You lost a lot of blood. I think you need to take it easy the whole weekend. You can’t attend to your duties now,” Ezekiel said.

“They don’t care about any of that,” she snorted.

She found a blanket on the floor and wrapped it around herself. She would need to get to Jared’s like this so she could shower and find some clothes to wear.

“Where are you going?”

Ezekiel came out of his bed. She avoided looking lower than his face as his hulking frame approached her.

“I have to go and get something to wear –“

“You’re not going near Jared again,” Ezekiel growled

“Excuse me?”

The nerve of him! He couldn’t order her around just because he was an Alpha! This had nothing to do with him.

“Where was he when all this was happening? Why did his pack just stand there? They would have smelled Claire a mile away,” he growled.

That burst her bubble, and her anger drained away. Was this true? Could Jared have known! Had another person betrayed her?

“The shower is through there. I’ll get you some clothes, then I’ll drive you to your duties.”

Ezekiel didn’t even wait to see if she agreed before he walked out of the room in his boxers.

She took a long shower with her mind going over the events of last night. Ezekiel was right, Jared would have known Claire was waiting there. Wouldn’t he? She hated that now she couldn’t trust anyone because she’d been backstabbed the two times she tried.

When she finally came out of the bathroom, some clothes were on the bed. They were in her size, so she hoped that meant they were not Claire’s.

As she made her way down the stairs, lead filling her stomach with each step, Ezekiel came out from one of the rooms. His hair was damp, showing he was also freshly showered but hadn’t dried it. And he was thankfully clothed. He led her out of the house, which had a similar layout to Jared’s and then to a car parked outside. It wasn’t the same car he had picked her up in before.

“Where’s your other car?”

“Being cleaned,” Ezekiel answered.

They made the drive to the kitchen in silence as she wondered if she still had anything left in her to make it through another week in this hell hole.

“I’ll pick you up when you’re finished.”

She didn't respond except to mumble thank you as she got out of the car. She was already half an hour late, so she didn't bother going any quicker.

From the hush that settled over the kitchen as she entered, she knew w they had heard what happened. The supervisor didn't say anything or pull out her tablet to penalize her. And the other wolves ignored her for the rest of the shift. It was an unexpectedly peaceful shift.

When the finally finished and made her way to the front to grab something to eat quickly, she almost lost her balance when she was bundled into a firm hug.

"I heard what happened. I'm so sorry," Emily whispered

She couldn't tell if Emily was telling the truth because it was clear that her bullshit radar was broken now. But she let the Omega take her hand and then lead her to a table before the brought over enough food for both of them.

"I heard Claire's gone," Emily whispered after they had eaten. "I think we should do something to cheer you up and start afresh next should go to town. I can help you replace your clothes."

That perked her up.

"Town, as in out of this place?" she asked.

“Sort of. The opposite end of campus. The locals are friendly and know about us”

She felt the first genuine smile forming on her lips as the Omega continued to talk. This had to be the way out. She was going home.