

## The Stress Increases

### Chapter 4

#### Gabi's POV

I could not sleep at all, my mind was all over the place. The worry I feel about the unknown won't let me rest. Is Elena hurt? Are they feeding her? Michelle is still out with whatever they injected her with, and I fear what Elena could be going through. I went to get up and Tanner's hand on my waist let me know that he was up too, as he gave me a little squeeze. I slid back into bed, snuggling into him, as he wrapped me in his arms. I needed this. I needed the comfort and love that I could only get from my mate. His scent swirls around me, and I lift up to give him a kiss. He knows me so well, and he was showing me that he was right here in this with me. We will deal with this situation together, but I knew what I needed to do.

"I am going to head to the pack hospital to stay with Michelle. I know her parents got no sleep last night watching over her. There is just something about hospitals that is so draining. If they don't want to go grab some sleep, at least I can watch over her for them to be able to go grab some coffee or breakfast." I told Tanner.

"That is a good idea. I know they will appreciate it. I am going to go set a board up in the oce. I am sure that none of us got any sleep last night. Dawson is already heading down to his oce himself. We have a lot to gure out, and not a lot of time to do it in. We will get our baby girl back, Gabi, I promise you that." Tanner told me as he kissed my forehead and we both got up to get dressed. It was 5 a.m., and we tried to stay in bed to get at least a little rest, but sleep never came. I was too worried about what she was dealing with, what was happening to her. I am praying that Michelle has seen something that can help us when she wakes up.

We got dressed by the light from the closet and I kissed Tanner goodbye as he got off the elevator to go to the Alpha oce. I started a jog as soon as I exited the packhouse, and ran over to the hospital. I was originally in a hurry to get there but then stopped outside her room. Seeing the pain on her parent's faces stopped me cold. I know that my own pain was reected on my face, as her father stepped to the door to open it for me. My heart aches at missing Elena, and seeing Michelle in this state makes my fear intensify. Nothing will repair what I am feeling until I can hold her in my arms again, and know that she is safe.

"I am sorry for interrupting, but since I couldn't sleep I was stopping to see if you would like a small break. I would be glad to stay with Michelle if you want to run home for a nap, as it is hard to sleep here in the hospital. You have been here all night, so I am sure you are exhausted. If you want to go grab a shower, get some coffee, or breakfast," I told them.

"We are OK with a small break, I wouldn't mind stretching my legs. We have been sitting here all night. The doctor said that she was injected with something, but they said that it should be wearing off soon. The tests didn't come back with what it was, as most of it had worn off by the time they tested for it around midnight. Gabi, I am so sorry about Elena. We will get her back. I know that Michelle will want to help the moment she wakes up. She thinks of Elena as her very own sister. This is going to upset her so much when she nds out what happened." Crystal told me.

I fought to keep the tears from falling down my face. Yes, I knew they loved each other like true sisters. I didn't want to be in the room when Michelle found out what happened to Elena. Seeing her pain, I knew was going to ramp mine up as well. I didn't want to add to their pain, but I did hope that Michelle had seen something that would get us on the right track for nding Elena.

Crystal and Julian left to go grab a coffee and I sat down in the chair that Crystal had been sitting in near Michelle. I told them to take their time, and maybe walk outside to stretch their legs. None of us knew how long she would be out. They believed that she had been injected with wolfsbane, but were not 100% positive. The doctor slipped in to check on her and mentioned that he believed, but could not prove, that what she was injected with, was some new mixture.

I saw the scrapes on her hands, and bruises on her body where she had been hit. Michelle had fought their attackers. She has a black eye and a swollen cheek from taking some very strong punches. Whoever did this, did not care that they were ghting young women. I am sure it was because the girls got a few good hits in on them, and the men's egos got bruised at being hurt. I am proud that both girls went down ghting. They were both taught how to ght from a young age. When it is one-on-one, they are very successful in a fair ght, so I know that a group had to have approached them to result in what happened. Being girls, they get underestimated all the time. It helps them to be able to take the opening they are being given, it allows them to catch their opponent by surprise. It helps them, and they usually win the ght as a result of it.

Michelle moved a few times as if she was having a bad dream, and moaned occasionally, but she didn't wake up. Her parents took me at my word and went to take a walk and grabbed something to eat. They both came back with a coffee in hand, to stay with their daughter. I hugged them both before heading to the door. "Please let me know when she wakes up. I need to know if she knows anything about who may have taken Elena." I said, with my voice breaking when I said my daughter's name. I didn't intend for that to happen, but I couldn't stop the tears that came with it. I had to excuse myself and go outside to calm down. This whole thing has got me so upset, and unable to focus.

I have been in serious ghts before. I have been hurt at least a hundred times. I can tell you right now, that the pain I felt from those injuries did not hurt as much as not knowing where my baby girl was. They both nodded and agreed to mindlink me when Michelle woke up. They know that Tanner and I loved Michelle like a bonus daughter. She and Elena are very much alike. They are both tomboys. They like to be comfortable, usually wearing workout clothes, instead of designer clothes. They do like an occasional formal event as they were both excited about going to get evening gowns for the spring ball.

I now wish I had gone with them to the mall, but I knew that Elena was planning to grab my birthday present while she was out. She wouldn't have wanted me to spoil the surprise, so she didn't invite me along. We haven't had a problem or issue with any other packs for years. We had no idea that she would be in danger when she left the pack. I headed back to the packhouse, walking slowly and trying to think clearly. My mind is a jumbled mess. I need to stop and think. I need to stop focusing on the fact that my daughter is missing and treat it like a mission. I need to take my emotions out of the equation, so I can focus, but I don't know if I can.

I got a mindlink from Tanner to come to the oce. I picked up my pace and headed over to meet him. I can see the board is up, and some of a timeline established. We will know more when the discs get here and we can see what happened at the mall. Dawson and Tanner were already there early, but it was not 630 a.m. yet, and the rest of the group from last night was already there. I headed over to grab a coffee from the coffee bar we added 2 years ago. We spent so much time here in the oce, it just made sense. I am thankful when the rst hit of caffeine hits me. I needed this, and whether it is all in my head, or not, I believe that I think better with the caffeine boost.

"Wells and Vera Black will be here in less than 10 minutes. They stopped to pick up the surveillance discs from the Security Manager at the mall on their way here. Jason and Liz are with them. They left Carson behind to run the pack. He will come later after he gets his Beta and Gamma set up to take over for the next week or two, as we don't know how long this is going to take. Carson will be bringing 150 warriors with him when he comes." Tanner told me when I sat down next to him. The room is oddly silent, compared to how it usually is. The silence only goes to show just how serious this is to us all.