

39 Cravings

Eve~ 1

"Agnes," I called as she washed my hair. "Is there anything I can use for... cramps?"

She paused. "Of course, ma'am," she replied.

I let out a breath of relief.

She handed me a bottle of pills and a glass of water.

"Take two," she supplied. "And get some rest."

"Please, is it certain that it will work?" I asked. It had to work, or the smell alone would cause big trouble.

"This is what I use, and it always works," she assured me.

She turned on her heel and left.

I did as she had asked and fought the urge to get out of bed and lay linens on the ground to sleep again. But I had to remember to act like Ellen, a royal who had never known hardship in all her 23 years of life, and not like a girl who had grown accustomed to sleeping on the ground.

Ever since James's betrayal, I was sure that he

had rejected our mate bond because later that same month, the heat began. I would be driven to pain and near insanity because my body craved a mate.

I used to believe that menstrual cramps were bad until the heat began. The heat was a different kind of agony altogether, one that clawed at every nerve in my body, demanding relief. It was relentless—worse than anything I had ever endured. My body craved something that I could no longer have—a mate to ease the unbearable pain, the bond that had been severed the moment James betrayed me.

I clenched my fists, forcing myself to breathe slowly, trying to calm the rising panic. It wasn't just the pain; it was the vulnerability that came with it. The arousal that accompanied the pain was as though it was in close competition with it. It was all-consuming in its intensity. My body would be so desperate that it would release pheromones that attracted unmated and mated males alike.

Lying back in the bed, I closed my eyes, willing the pills to take effect. If this didn't work, I didn't know how long I could maintain my composure because there was no composure where the

heat was concerned—only a carnal hunger that ate away at me like an unrelenting destructive mouse.

The minutes ticked by, and slowly, the cramps began to fade, replaced by a dull ache that was far more manageable. I let out a long breath, relief washing over me. At least for now, I could keep up the act.

I could sleep, and by tomorrow morning, I would take more pills. If I could survive tomorrow, I could manage the rest of the five days. The first day was always the most brutal. After relief washed over me, so did exhaustion. My eyelids grew heavy, and I finally let slumber take me away.

Hades~

I got up, my head snapping to the door of my bedroom immediately. A strange scent had returned with a vengeance, and it was unmistakable this time. My senses, sharp as ever, honed in on the intoxicating scent of arousal, thick in the air and impossible to ignore. It wasn't just any scent—it was hers.

Ellen...

I inhaled deeply, my pulse quickening as the scent stirred something primal within me. She was in heat. Of course, she would have tried to hide it, but there are things you simply can't conceal—not from me, not from any wolf. The scent of a female in heat was unmistakable, and it drew attention whether she wanted it or not.

Our rooms were floors apart, and if it was this strong...

I got out of bed and pulled on a robe. I made my way to her room, and when I got to her floor, there were other men there, as expected. 1

"Kael," I called him. 1

His eyes shot to me, and he shook off the haze that the pheromones would have induced. My security team also now had their eyes on me. They blinked and snapped straight back into reality.

"Go. Now," I growled.

Kael came to my side just as the other men left as fast as they could. 2

"It's strong," Kael commented. "Crazy strong. I don't even remember leaving my room."

I nodded. "It's strong for sure. Go."



He nodded and turned on his heel. When I was left alone in the hallway, I stood outside her door, the scent now overwhelming—suffocating even. It was like a thick fog, clouding my thoughts and heightening every primal instinct I had. I clenched my fists, trying to control the growing urge within me. No wonder the others had been drawn here like moths to a flame. Her scent was intoxicating, maddening even.

The closer I got, the stronger it became. My wolf, always controlled, now paced restlessly beneath the surface, claws ready to emerge. I could hear her faintly through the door, soft groans of pain mixed with labored breathing. She was suffering, and every second of it was driving her scent deeper into the walls, into the air, into me.

"Ellen," I called through the door, my voice low, trying to maintain composure. "Open the door."

There was a pause, followed by another pained whimper, then her voice, strained and weak. "Go away..."

I exhaled, running a hand through my hair. Of course she would refuse. She wouldn't want me—or anyone—seeing her like this. But this wasn't something she could handle alone, not in the

state she was in. Her heat was too strong. If I could smell it this clearly from outside the door, it must be unbearable inside.

"Open the door," I repeated, more forceful this time, but there was only silence in response.

I growled under my breath, patience wearing thin. I reached for the door handle, twisting it easily. The moment the door opened, the scent hit me like a wall. My breath caught, and for a moment, I was stunned by the sheer potency of it. It was beyond anything I had anticipated. Her pheromones filled the room, so thick I could almost see them swirling in the air. 1

And there she was, lying on the bed, writhing in pain, her face contorted in agony. She clutched the sheets as if they were the only thing grounding her, her body drenched in sweat, skin flushed. Her breaths came in ragged gasps, and her eyes—when they opened for a brief moment—were wild, unfocused.

The heat had consumed her completely.

"Damn it," I muttered under my breath, stepping inside and closing the door behind me. The wave of pheromones slammed into me again, harder now, and I had to brace myself, fighting to stay in



control.

The moment I got close enough to touch her, she lunged off the bed, grabbed my face, and her mouth crashed onto mine with a hunger so primal, so desperate, that it took me by surprise. Her lips moved against mine with a ferocity that made it clear this wasn't about passion—it was about survival. The heat had taken over her completely, and she was barely aware of what she was doing. Her body was running on instinct, craving relief from the unbearable torment it was trapped in. 1

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