

Chapter 19

GABRIEL

I met my best friend on the worst day of my life. It was that moment that drew us together, creating an inseparable bond that was eventually blessed by Selene.

My parents joined the Blue Crest pack right around the time that Alpha Andrew took his title. Life was not as bad for Omegas back then. Alpha Andrew believed that his father had been too weak in ruling the over the pack, and the Omegas began being used as bargaining chips to strengthen the pack.

My parents died when I was nine, but nobody told me what happened to them. It was not until I was older that I learned the truth. The warriors got carried away with taking out their frustrations. That was what our kind was used for after all. That was our purpose in this godforsaken pack.

I was sitting underneath the tree that my father taught me to climb. My heart was broken, and I was crying for their loss. I did not know what to do. I had no parents or family now and was all alone.

A girl my age knelt down in front of me and placed her warm hands over the top of my knees. She was very pretty with black hair and the bluest eyes I had ever seen. Those eyes were filled with so much compassion that it stilled my

broken heart.

"I'm Elle. What's wrong?" she asked.

"I'm Gabe," I said, wiping my eyes. I was embarrassed that she caught me crying. Surely she would tease me, but I was surprised when she did not. "My ... my parents died today, and now I'm all alone. They were my only family," I said quietly.

She sat down next to me and rested her head on my shoulder. It felt nice instead of being weird because she was a stranger. Something about her made me feel like everything would all be okay.

"I don't have any family either. Alpha found me a few years ago and brought me here. We're both alone, but we don't have to be. We can be each other's family. I don't remember anything about mine. It's all blank, but I always think that if I could remember something that I would hold onto it. I know it hurts right now, but you'll get through this. We'll get through it. Together?" she asked, looking up at me and smiling softly.

"Together," I agreed.

That was the beginning of our journey together. From that moment on, we got through things together. I hated living in the room that was ours, so Elle suggested that we could share her room. We were completely inseparable since the day that she saved me. The worst day of my life became the

beginning of the best friend I could have ever found in my entire life.

That was what my mind had been focusing on instead of my whirlwind of fear and panic with the fact that they would end up killing Elle if we did not find them fast enough. My mind focused on who she was to me, and why she was so important.

Elle was the sweetest and most selfless person to those who deserved it. It was safe to say that Elle never let things slide in terms of protecting those she loved. Every count of abuse was tabulated. Every scar was tallied, and every broken pup was promised justice. Being in charge of the packhouse certainly had its privileges. She hated the job, but she loved the freedom it gave her because it allowed her and I to discretely pay those warriors back.

Faye was a great accomplice to have when it came to covering our scent. It allowed us to sneak around patrol units and set up traps for those pieces of shit. Most of the ideas came from Faye herself, hence why I always called her mischievous.

'Our group needs to go right,' Vince told Tyre who then relayed it all. Faye's ability to mindlink multiple people from our pack as well as those who were not was so much cooler, but beggars could not be choosers.

We finally made it up to the branch-off mark, and luckily it pulled me like it would have pulled her. Both groups had fifty

wolves. The Council broke off between these two and we had Thompson and another with us. It was safe to say that Thompson begged to be with our group. He was fascinated by this bond, so we agreed. I had never seen a grown man so happy before.

Vince stumbled as he felt the same thing from before. We could feel them whipping her. Tyre was there, pressing up against him to keep him steady.

'Look up,' I heard in my mind. The voice was very soft and feminine but not one I had ever heard before.

Vince looked up, and that was when he saw a light rising above the trees. That had to have been Selene's voice. There was no mistaking it with the warm feelings that it caused.

'Follow me. Selene showed me the way,' Vince told Tyre.

He bounded off as quickly as possible through the trees. Tyre was keeping steady next to us even though I knew that he could go faster. Faye had never gotten the chance to truly stretch her legs until tonight, but it was remarkable how fast she was. Tyre was just as fast as her though.

'Can you see the light?' Vince asked.

'No. The Goddess showed you because you're the only one who can see it. You're the one with the bond to Mate, and before you ask, we aren't upset about it. It's a blessing.'

I had been wondering about that, but I was not sure how to ask. Perhaps Vince had mentioned something to Tyre earlier. Either that, or he just wanted to reassure us that they were not upset. Once Eric rejected her, Selene started talking to her more frequently. One of those times was to explain about the bond. Then Kade heard that his new mate and I had a ridiculously strong bond that was divinely reinforced. It would have upset many mates upset. Kade was just one-of-a-kind.

Vince and Tyre's pace slowed, signaling everyone else to slow down as well. The light was very bright and coming from the top of a house. Vince's heart raced with the fact that we found her.

Kade and I took our forms back, but he had everyone else hold their positions while we took a closer look.

Large bushes provided us the cover necessary to get a better look at the house. It was all one story which worked well because of the fact that we would have less area to search for her. There were only two of them, so if we could lure them away then that would be even better.

Now that we knew where she was, we could afford for Lucinda to project back in to find out where they were.

KADE

I agreed with Gabriel that it was time to have Lucinda go back in. We were afraid to risk it when we did not know where Elle was because it would have possibly spooked them if they happened to see her. However, that was no longer an issue. So, we were just waiting on what her to come back from the projection.

'They're both watching TV by the window. The front door opens behind them,' she said.

Perfect. This would lead to less complication overall. I had been afraid of Elle getting caught up in the middle of us gaining entry. We did not have to worry about that now. Things were looking up on our side of things. She just needed to hold on a few minutes longer before we could rescue her.

'We go in hot and heavy. Don't kill them. Luna gets the final say of what happens to them,' I relayed to my team and had Tyre relay it to anyone else's wolves that were not mine.

Everyone shifted back and threw on the clothes that we brought with us. No offense, but I did not want any naked males around my mate or naked females around me for my mate's benefit. I did not want any unlucky she-wolf to be slaughtered for being in proximity to me like that. My mate was ruthless. I would never doubt her ability to fight or kill after such an epic display with the rogues.

'Faye was amazing,' Tyre purred. Yes. She certainly was.

We all got into position with Apollo and me at the front. Gabriel was right behind us. Directly behind him was the healer wolf that the Council brought. She would be able to help Elle out until we could get her to the pack hospital.

My lungs took in a deep breath. I brought my foot back and kicked the door with enough force that it was thrown all the way across the room into the wall. My warriors had them restrained before the idiots could even get into a fighting stance. They looked around at us, completely stunned that we found them.

"Which?" I asked Gabriel who came to stand beside me. He knew what I was asking even from a single word.

The two men looked like corpses to me, but I would not waste my energy on them right now. I just wanted to know which one signed their death certificate without a trial.

Gabriel walked over to the taller one and grasped the guy's shoulder. The little bitch cried out when claws dug into his flesh. We would have time to catch up in a while. There would definitely be plenty to catch up on.

"Going to kill us now?" Dulaney asked, smirking at me.

If it were not for the fast-paced pattering of his heart, he might have almost fooled us with his nonchalance. No. We all heard how afraid he was in this moment. We could choose to slice his throat, and he would be unable to stop us. He was now at our mercy. I wondered how he liked that.

"I'm the least of your worries. My mate, on the other hand, will be the one to decide how much she plays with you first," I informed him.

His smirk fell immediately at that. He had every reason to fear those words with everything he did to her. I would help her exact whatever punishment she deemed fit with him. It was about time for her to take back complete control from the assholes here.

Gabriel and I just laughed at him as we went to find her. It was not hard because the scent of blood was overpowering. I ran down the hallway until I got to a single door and pulled it open.

All the air whooshed out of me when I saw what they did to her. Elle was chained up on the wall, her head hanging limply. Her naked body was covered in blisters and cuts with blood everywhere. It was on her body, on the wall, and on the floor. There was too much blood all over everything.

I rushed in, ripping the chains from the walls because I did not want to risk hurting her by ripping them off her. Gabriel got the last one as I caught her so that she would not fall. The wolfsbane burned as it connected with my skin, but I did not care one damn bit. She was my priority, and I would take whatever pain was necessary to help her.

I picked her up her limp body, cradling her against my chest. Then I carried her to the living room.

"Get those bastards out of here. Nobody kills them until she decides to. She's their judge, jury, and fucking executioner," I ordered. The fury inside of me burned hotter than it ever had in my entire life.

Gabriel got a blanket and laid it on the floor for her. He went to leave since she was naked and wanted to respect me as her mate. However, I knew that he had taken care of her many times. I also knew that he did not see it that way, so I stopped him. He looked very confused.

"Answer me honestly. Does she appeal to you?" I asked, looking at him intently to see his reaction. The grimace on his face said it all loud and clear.

"I mean this with all due respect. No. She's my best friend. I've never seen her as anything else and never will," he told me.

"Then stay. Tyre was honest that we aren't upset about your bond. She means a lot to you and you to her. I respect that and won't come between that either."

He nodded with appreciation and made room for the Healer to assess Elle. My eyes remained focused on my mate, but my mind was churning with thoughts.

Thompson said that there was a reason for them to have this bond. This was a good case of that. Gabriel shared the bit about how Alpha Andrew hired people to find her. That meant that he knew about her somehow. It made me

wonder if other people did as well. Perhaps the Goddess knew that there would be more coming for her, trying to get their hands on her. That was why Elle needed more than just me to help protect her.

Gabriel and Elle's bond could do things that a mate-bond would not be able to. I doubted that would ever be able to track her the way that he did or be able to mindlink at such a distance. We were currently thirty miles away from the packhouse, but he had no trouble at all. Vince could even feel Faye at that distance. There was no limitation to it either. It was incredibly useful to say the least.

"We need to get this wolfsbane off her before I can heal her at all. Thankfully, there doesn't appear to be internal damage. However, some of these slices are very deep. Can you take her to the shower? The water will wash it off," the healer said.

As gently as possible, I scooped Elle back up into my arms and went in search of the bathroom. Gabriel turned the shower on and gave us privacy. This was not the way I ever intended to see my mate's naked form, but there was no other choice at the moment.

I laid her down gently before removing my shorts and picking her back up into my arms. I was careful to keep her face out of the water as much as possible. I did, however, let it wash over her briefly just in case there was any lingering wolfsbane there.

The water washed over her cuts, tinting the running water red with her blood. My heart broke for her as I took inventory of what the bastards did to her. Hopefully, Faye would begin healing her once the wolfsbane was cleaned off. However, even the blisters, burns, and cuts did not detract from her beauty.

“Darling, you’re one hell of a fucking fighter. I’ve always prided myself on being a strong Alpha, but I was wrong because I’ve never met anyone as strong as you. Everyone else pales in comparison. I need you to continue staying strong for me. I need you to come back to me because I can’t lose you now that I’ve found you. You’re it for me now that I know that you exist. I won’t make a perfect mate, but I’ll try to be whatever you need me to be. Your partner, your lover, your confidant, or even your punching bag.”

My father gave me advice shortly before he died about how to be a good mate. It was about meeting them in the middle each day. You assessed what they needed and supported that need. Being a mate was not just about being their lover. It was about being their everything. My mother had been his everything, and that was why he could never take another mate. She was still his everything even in death.

Once I was confident that the wolfsbane was rinsed off, I got out of the shower. While my heart broke for her, it was also filled with immense pride. She had been through so much in life but kept fighting despite it all.

I set her down gently and pulled my shorts back on before picking her up and carrying her out to the living room. My lips pressed against her forehead as I laid her down on a fresh blanket.

Gabriel placed his hand on my shoulder to comfort me. He had a pretty clear idea what I was feeling right now. Tyre laid down, watching as Elle was reassessed. He was just as restless as I was about the state that they put her in.

While we wanted nothing more than to wipe them from existence, we agreed that it was her decision about what happened to them since she was the one they hurt. This was not the first time that they did this either. I saw the scars. They did not take away her beauty at all, but they did show me some of what she had been through so far in life. The newer scars probably came after the rejection. Gabriel mentioned that they tortured her this past month, but I had not realized until now that he meant it literally.

The healer's hands emitted a bright white light as her hands slowly passed over Elle's cuts. I nearly sobbed in relief as the bleeding slowed down.

It took another twenty minutes until the healer leaned back and gave me a nod. Her face was dripping with sweat, and it was easy to see how fatigued she was. She pushed her gift further than she had in a while or ever if I had to guess.

"She'll survive the trip to the hospital. You got to her just in

time before she bled out entirely. They'll need to replenish her blood. Do you know her blood type?" she asked.

"O negative," Gabriel said without hesitation. Again, I was thankful for him being here because I never would have known it.

"Let's hope that they have it stocked. She's a universal donor, but can only receive O negative blood," the healer said as she checked Elle's pulse one last time.

"I'm O negative, so I'll donate to her," I said.

Honestly, I did not trust any blood that was stored here. I also wanted to be the one to provide for my mate. The thought of anyone else doing it did not sit right with me for some reason. I supposed it was an Alpha territorial issue. If she needed more than I could give then I would not have a problem with it. We would just see how much she needed first.

'Can you bring my bag to the door and knock? Gabriel will come get it,' I linked Apollo.

It did not even take a minute before there was a knock. Gabriel brought the bag over, so I grabbed the extra shirt of mine that I brought for her. He helped me sit her up while I put it over her head and pulled her arms through.

"Thank you very much. We can never repay you for your assistance, but please let us know if there is anything that we can help with," I told her sincerely.

+20 BONUS

"It's my honor to help. Your mate is very strong. Her wounds should have killed her, but she survived. Please let me know how she is later on," she said, bowing her head to me.

I scooped up my mate and cradled her to my chest as we left the house. Everyone looked at Elle, and I could nearly feel the collective anger aimed at what they did to her. The healer stabilized her, but she still had the wounds.

Someone had enough forethought to have a car brought to us, and I was thankful for that. It would make the trip back easier for her as well as get us there faster. Apollo opened the back door and waited for me to get situated in the back with Elle on my lap before he shut the door and got into the driver's seat. Gabriel got into the passenger's seat, and we headed out.

"We're almost there, darling. Just keep holding on," I whispered into her ear before placing a kiss to her forehead.



Shana Allen Author

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They found her just in time. Is she out of the woods yet though?
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