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“What is your name?” A thick finger grazed my face as I sat up.

I shivered but my reaction stemmed more from the feeling of his voice caressing me than the weather. He spoke in a quiet resonant voice that wrapped around me like a warm and heavy blanket. If his presence felt like home, his low, distinct voice felt like a hug.

Still, I could not shake off the effect of his presence. He had a forbidden aura and sharp eyes that watched me like a hawk. I trembled inside me with fear yet he had done nothing to me. If I ever angered this man –

His steely gaze narrowed on me as I took my time supplying my name. It was not that I did not want to tell him – it was just – His presence unnerved me. I felt a suffocating urge to hide or cower out of sight but I forced my voice to come out.

“Sihana Asena.” My voice came out as a subdued whisper while I fought back a shiver.

“Sihana Asena,” he tested the name on his tongue

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and a shiver raced down my spine. His deep baritone warmed something deep inside me. My wolf purred, the sound like a rumbling cat, at the sound of her name on her mate's tongue. "Call me Cahir Perseus."

"Yes, Alpha," I responded like a broken record to the underlying command in his tone.

"I am not your Alpha." His thumb stroked my bottom lip, sending more shivers racing down my spine. It felt like waves of electricity flowed from his body to mine with his thumb caressing my bottom lip and his eyes roamed my face. "Yet." With those words, he leaned into me, his hand gripping my jaw in place. Then he put his lips on mine and kissed me.

It was fire.

A blazing heat poured off him into me, scorching my skin and warming my insides as his lips moved against mine in a rough, dominant kiss. His velvety lips on mine sent a sharp shot of desire through me, like an aphrodisiac that sparked a deep, ravenous hunger in the depths of my being.

A big hand brushed through my hair, caressed my scalp and then gave a sharp tug. I gasped at the

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sudden movement but the gasp ended on a deep moan when his tongue slipped into my mouth, exploring deep. My hands found their way to his shirt, gripping the material as he pulled me closer, half-against me in the hospital bed.

He did something wicked with his tongue that pulled a low, lewd sound from me. My guts tightened, fire pooled at the pit of my stomach and I squeezed my thighs together. Breathless, I tried pulling away but his lips chased mine, recapturing my bottom lip between his teeth.

Out of nowhere, someone wrenched him off me with explosive violence that startled me out of my haze of lust. I opened my half-shut eyes to see Kade standing before the bed, blocking me from Cahir's sight. Peeking around Kade, I saw Cahir's face contort with his eyes hardening.

"Alpha Cahir, what is the meaning of this?" Kade growled, crossing his arms and widening his stance. His tone had a sharp edge and waves of anger poured off him.

"Do you understand what you are doing?" Cahir's deep, resonant baritone turned stone cold.

The air in the atmosphere dropped. The tension

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sizzling between both men made me apprehensive but I forced my feet to move me out of bed.

I wasn't stupid enough not to know what was going on between the two men but I did not want to be caught in the middle of it.

"Alpha Cahir – " Kade began but my mate cut him off.

"Kade, I will give you five seconds to step aside. One – " He held his gaze as he counted.

I wanted to say something to diffuse the building tension choking me but nothing came to mind. My legs quivered, urging me to leave, but I just found my mate and my body was loathe to leave him behind with a fight brewing.

"I did not invite you here for you to – " Kade's words were cut off when a blow landed on his mouth, causing blood and spittle to fly out, almost touching me.

Malicious anger gleamed in Cahir's eyes as he kicked Kade's knee, knocking him off his feet. I watched in horror as he yanked his hair back, forcing him to look up at him from the ground as he glared.

“How dare you stand in my way?” My arms came up to wrap around myself as those words filled the room with a chilly cold.

Like a scene from a bad movie, Kade shoved Cahir away from him with an ill-concealed vengeance. He head-butted into him and toppled him to the ground, getting on top of him in a second.

He raised his fist and slammed it against Cahir’s head – at least, he tried to. His fist connected with the hard ground and the door went flying open in that minute.

“What the fuck?” His beta, Aristo, rushed into the room and pushed Kade off him. Kade stumbled, rolled away and then rose to his knees, then his feet. He tried to charge at Cahir again but Aristo stood in his way.

“The fuck do you think you are doing?” The Beta barked. “What in the absolute hell is going on in here!” He looked around the room and his wandering eyes fell on me. “You – What the fuck happened?” His blue eyes met mine and glared at me. I felt the accusation in his gaze but I had done nothing wrong!

“Watch the way you speak to her,” Cahir knocked his Beta beside the head. “As for Alpha Kade – “ His eyes turned to address our new Alpha. “You have erred for ill.” A promise rang in his voice, a quiet, deadly promise that had Kade hardening further.

The door that Aristo left half-open fully opened to accommodate Alpha Warren and the doctor. Both men stopped at the threshold of the room, looking at the four of us in the room with suspicious eyes. Then Alpha Warren noticed the ruffled look on his son, making him step inside with concern creasing his weather-beaten face.

“Alpha Cahir, it is an honour to have you and your Beta grace our event.” He stood at his son’s side with his back stiff and straight.

“Warren.” Cahir’s voice was void of emotion as he addressed the outgoing Alpha. “Are you the doctor?” He addressed the other man standing in the room in his pristine white suit.

“Yes, I am Doctor Thomas. It is an honour – “ The doctor puffed out his chest as he spoke, taking great pride in his title and recognition.

“It has been over thirty minutes since I sent for you

regarding burns on a patient but you took your time." There was no accusation in his tone, no anger, nothing. But there could be no mistaking the aura surrounding him. He could hide his anger behind a blank face and a blank tone, but he could not hold it from wafting off him.

"Beta Grace told me it was not so serious so I stayed to listen to our Alpha finish his speech out of respect." The doctor did not see anything wrong in his statement or behaviour. He still had an amiable smile on his face, unable to read the room but Alpha Warren looked like he wanted to smack him upside the head.

"I feel like I am missing something," Aristo said.

"Alpha Cahir, can you explain what you were doing with her?" Kade growled, his fists clenched at his side.

"Can we take this discussion to my office?" Alpha Warren interjected.

"Did you get the information I asked for?" Cahir asked Aristo.

I stood at the side, wanting to disappear while the doctor's smile started to slip off, replaced by a

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wrinkled frown.

"I found out some things. Alpha Warren, I will need information about Avalon Carson and her family."

Aristo turned to Warren.

Everyone was talking but no one seemed to have any interest in keeping a topic going. Everyone said what they had on their mind and the tension in the air heightened with Cahir and Kade still eyeing each other.

"Why would you need information on our member?" Warren asked.

"She poured hot water on the girl over there."

Aristo pointed me out. "Cahir hates bullies so –"

"Shut up." Aristo stopped speaking at Cahir's command. "Not only do I hate bullies, Warren, I also hate Alphas that ignore bullying, doctors that would rather socialize than attend to their patients, and mutts that get in my way." His last words were directed at Kade.

"I –" Warren paused, looking from his son to Cahir.

"I do not understand."

"I will help you understand." Cahir's voice went

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uncharacteristically soft. "For the negligence and ill-treatment towards my mate, someone has to be held accountable."

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