

Chapter 28

ABBIE

A gnawing hunger twists my stomach, relentless and cruel. I am absolutely starving, my body weakened by the relentless denial of sustenance since I arrived in this wretched place. The mere thought of food sends a surge of longing through me, but the girls who dared to offer me a morsel of anything were met with brutal beatings. I can't bear to witness their suffering, not when my torment is unbearable. So, when the heavy door creaks open, I release a weary sigh and reluctantly disentangle myself from the bed, knowing all too well what awaits me.

Slumping onto the cold, unforgiving ground, I lean against the rough wall, seeking a smidge of comfort in this wretched existence. Only Kade enters the room this time, his imposing figure halting in front of me. Usually, it would be Cassandra who made her periodic visits, injecting me with some vile concoction that prevented my ability to shift. But today, she is nowhere to be seen.

“Get up!” he barks, his voice dripping with malice.

“Pardon?” I respond, confusion clouding my senses. This is not the usual routine, which scares me. Kade always derives pleasure from forcing me to watch as he indulges in indecent behavior with those poor girls before forcing himself upon me afterward, making me taste them on his cock. Now, his intentions seem different. A flicker of unease tingles in the air as he kicks me.

“Get up and get on the bed,” he commands, his tone laced with an unfamiliar urgency. Before I can comprehend his words, he reaches down and seizes my arm, wrenching me to my feet. My body rebels against his grip, instinctively fighting against the impending violation. My hand lashes out, delivering a stinging slap across his face, but it is futile as he retaliates with a vicious blow to mine. Pain ricochets through my body, blurring my vision and leaving my face throbbing with agony. Blood spurts from my nose, staining the air with a metallic tang as I stagger backward, my hair ripped painfully from his grasp.

In a daze, I gaze up at the ceiling, disoriented by the chaos unfolding around me. Kade’s furious growls reverberate in my ears as he lunges at me. Desperation fuels my actions as I lift my leg, quickly striking his balls. The impact elicits a grunt of pain, affording me a momentary respite to roll away and escape his clutches. But he is relentless, gripping my hair and wrenching my head back with brute force.

“You will obey your Alpha,” he snarls, his voice dripping with venom.

“You are not my Alpha!” I scream, defiance surging through me like a wild flame. He responds by shoving me back to the unforgiving floor.

Crawling toward the wall, I pull myself up, feeling the weight of his snarls bearing down upon me. And then, unexpectedly, he stops.

“Get on the bed!” he bellows, his command echoing through the room. But this time, it washes over me like a wave crashing against an impenetrable fortress. It doesn’t stick! A surge of disbelief courses through my veins, mingling with the hysteria bubbling inside me. And so, I laugh. Uncontrollably.

I cannot fathom why laughter spills from my lips, but it only serves to intensify my mirth. The furious expression etched upon Kade’s face takes on a comical quality at that moment, or perhaps I have simply lost touch with reality. He regards me as if I am insane, but there is no way I will comply and climb onto that bed. I would rather endure another merciless beating, for pain is familiar and something I can handle. Throughout the years, pain has been my constant presence, and I have developed an unbreakable pain threshold.

A beating, I could take one of those. Shit, I spent half my life taking those. So, if I have to choose. I will take a beating over, letting him take more from me.

The pain reverberates through my body, a slithering serpent of agony, yet I find myself unable to suppress a taunting smirk. “What’s wrong, Alpha? Can’t put your Luna in line?” I jeer, my voice laced with defiance.

His face contorts with fury, turning a shade of red that mirrors the rage burning within him. “Get on the bed!” he screams, his voice cracking

with desperation. But his command holds no power over me; it is feeble and pathetic, only serving to amuse me further.

As I wipe the blood from my nose, crimson stains smear across the back of my hand.

“Get on the bed!” he screams again, his face turning even redder. I giggle at his meager command.

My muscles tense, a wave of pain coursing up my spine like a relentless tidal surge. It engulfs me, threatening to consume me entirely. Yet still, I laugh. Pain has become an unwelcome constant in my life, an unyielding presence that no longer holds the power to break me. Years of enduring nothing but anguish has forged within me a limitless tolerance for suffering. I have anticipated this torment, braced myself for its arrival, and ultimately survived it.

Once again, I feel myself disconnecting from my surroundings, growing numb to everything around me. Let him hurt me, for pain is something I can endure. But can he? I know it must inflict its own brand of torment upon him, but as for me? No, pain resides in the realm of the mind. It is something I can switch on and off at will, desensitizing myself to its cruel touch. And so, that is precisely what I do.

Most would call me mad for what I intended to do. Calm washes over me as I let my mind float. I go on autopilot, then I poke the wolf.

“Surprised you even have a pack,” I taunt, my laughter echoing through the room. His eyes darken, shifting in a tempest of rage. “Mrs. Daley’s commands packed a better punch, and she was an omega!” The venom drips from my words, stinging his pride with a potency that cannot be ignored. His wolf lurches forward at the disrespect, his egotistic side coming forward wanting to force me to submit; I’ll die before I do.

His malt-colored wolf charges at me. Paws hit my chest, sending me flying back against the wall. My brain rattles inside my skull as it smashes against the brick wall. He snarls, stalking toward me, and suddenly, I am seeing double, but a sound never escapes my lips. Not even when his razor-sharp teeth tear through my flesh as he mauls me.

Don’t cry, tears won’t save you, I think, willing myself to remain silent. I am done shedding tears for this monster, I remind myself. When he gets no reaction from tearing into my thigh, he tears into my shoulder and arm. Blood drenches and pools around me. My body shakes, but I do not make a sound; I just stare a silly smile on my face. Instead, I go back to my safe place. Zoning out, my mind taking me to a place where no one can touch me. A place I’ve been many times before.

I exist as an empty shell, only coming back to my surroundings when his teeth snap at my face. His fur puffs out as he growls when I hear a sob. In the commotion, my eyes flit toward the door to see a woman. Tears stain her cheeks, but none fall from my eyes; I feel nothing as I stare back at her fear-stricken face.

In this life, every corner seems to hide something ready to knock me down. It’s been one hit after another, each punch harder than the last;

every bit of hope I try to hold on to gets smashed before it can even take root.

Being fearless? Being strong, being hopeful? That's not about being brave for me. It's more like I'm just too tired to be scared anymore. Life has beaten me up, taking everything that mattered – my innocence, my dignity, the chance to love, to really live.

What's left is just me, stripped bare, down to the broken, cracked, and charred bones of my existence; those bones are painted red, black, and blue, red for my blood that's been spilled, blue for the pain endured, black for my soul they have broken, barely hanging on, a shadow of who I used to dream of being.

And what I dreamed of wasn't ego-based, wasn't selfish, wasn't materialistic; it was freedom, freedom to be more than I was yesterday. A name, not rogue, whore, slut, slave, but Abbie, yet as each day passed, I eventually forgot who she was, beaten into silence, stripped of all rights, pillaged of everything.

So death doesn't scare me now. It doesn't make my heart race or fill me with dread. Instead, it feels like it's calling to me, promising a break from all this pain.

Instead, it beckons with the gentle allure of freedom, a release from this nightmare that has become my existence. Where life has been a relentless teacher of pain, teaching me the brutal lessons of loss and despair, death whispers of peace, of the end of suffering.

For in death, I see not an end but a beginning—a chance to escape the chains that bind me to this tortured existence.

So, I stand on the precipice of death, gazing into the abyss, unafraid. Not because I'm brave but because life has broken me to the point where continuing to exist, to endure this endless cycle of pain, is the true horror.

Kade growls and I turn my attention to his enormous wolf standing over me. He whimpers when he backs up, sniffing my thigh where he tore it apart, and I glance down. So much blood; no part of me is left unstained, left unmarred.

“Are you done?” I ask. My voice comes out unwavering, yet I can't recognize it as my own. Kade turns his furry head to the side, examining me, and I stare back, unblinking.

Kade shifts back, his bones snapping as he crouches before me. For a second, I think I see guilt flash across his features. “You will learn. You only had to get on the bed,” he says, his eyes scanning over my mauled flesh. “It didn't have to be this way,” he snaps, making my eyebrows rise. I laugh and shake my head, but I can feel my blood draining out of me. Feel the blood leave my face, the cold sweat beading over my skin, and I smile.

“Get the doctor,” Kade screams as I feel myself fading, the room becoming dull.

“Abbie? I... you need to stay awake,” Kade says, and I feel the tingles spread across my skin as he tries to stop the bleeding. I am bleeding out and dying, I know, and he knows it.

“Get the Pack Doctor now!” screams Kade as my mark burns my neck, and I relish the pain of the bond dying along with me.

“Does it hurt?” I murmur, my eyelids closing. My head falls forward, unable to keep it up when he grabs my face. His fingers pry my eyelids open. I only see white.

“What...? Hurry up!” Kade screams, and I hear people running up the steps toward us.

“Does it hurt?” I repeat.

“You think I wanted to do this? Of course, it hurts, I...”

“Because I feel nothing!” I giggle.

“Hang on, Abbie,” Kade says.

I snort. “For what? Certainly not for you,” I mumble, my lips going numb.

“Hang on for me. I didn’t mean it. You should know better; I...I...” he stutters frantically.

“Just hang on,” he says as my body feels more and more limp.

“I’m sorry, Ivy,” I whisper.

“Yes, yes, hang on for Ivy, please, Abbie, hang on for Ivy,” Kade begs, shaking me.

“I already did. She’s safe now,” I breathe out as I slide down the wall I am leaning on, my face pressing against the carpet, and I can hear the frantic beating of my heart drumming in my ears. I focus on that sound, waiting for the moment it will stop; when everything will go black.