

CHAPTER 152

Kai POV

"When can we move?" whispers Winter a bit impatiently, from her position behind a shrub. We're a fair distance away from the location, milling about, waiting for the rest of the men to show up. Johnathon, is close by, directing his own men to get into position. King Axel is mere minutes away.

"When the King gets here" I hiss back, trying not to show my own impatience.

Damien and Drake are with Langdon, preparing themselves for what we are about to do.

I glance over at the building in the distance. It's old, descript and a warehouse which sold who knows what at one time. It would look abandoned if you glanced at it, but the men in the distance, holding rifles and guarding it, told a completely different story. From what my tech team had advised, the majority of the men were either guarding, or inside guarding what looked like large cages, with people inside of them. Thank goodness Simon had stayed behind; the last thing I needed was to try and be looking after that kid on top of everything else. Even if he hadn't quite been happy to be left behind.

"King Axel is approaching" Drake tells us calmly. I give a start, he'd been so quiet I hadn't heard his footsteps, or maybe it was because there were so many of us, scattered around the perimeter.

"Good" I hiss back, Winter brightening at the words. She was dying to get inside and help get the prisoners out. I'm both proud of my mate and extremely nervous about her going inside. I can't afford to lose her, but I know, deep down, she's more than capable of taking care of herself.

"Alpha Kai" King Axel greets me grimly, surveying the small army with a frown as he directs his own people to join the perimeters of our group.

"King Axel" I say with a small smile "I wish we were meeting under different circumstances."

He gives a short laugh. It's got a twinge of bitterness towards it. I guess he's still smarting over Vanessa and how she'd managed to get him completely under her spell.

"It is what it is" he says drily "now is this all the people we have?"

"It's all we could amass in such a short time frame" I answer a little on edge. Was he criticizing me?

"How many hunters are there?" he asks.

I grimace. "At least fifty outside, inside it's hard to tell. There are human beings inside, scientists. I'm not considering them as threats, but they also aren't innocent and I won't be sad if they lose their lives" I say honestly as he grunts his approval.

"Snipers?" he asks.

"I have a few set up outside the perimeter, ready to shoot on command. Drake and Damien will be outside with Langdon, taking care of those threats. I, you, Winter and the rest of the men besides those with my beta, will make our way inside the building and take down those who are guarding the cages. If the scientists attempt to intervene, the men have orders to kill them as well. I won't have them risk their lives for human beings capable of injuring them."

"Good man" says Axel quietly, "our people must be protected as best as we can. Now, let's get these poor bastards out of their prison" he says stiffly.

I turn to Damien and Drake. "Gather your men, Langdon, you're in charge. Prepare to attack the outside of the building and the grounds."

Langdon gives me a stiff nod. Winter quickly gives her brothers a hug. "Be careful" she whispers thickly "and come back to me alive."

"Same goes to you sister" Drake says, hugging her tight, Damien doing the same. They both glare at me.

"Keep her safe" warns Damien, the threat in his voice easy to hear.

I give Langdon a handshake. "Be careful out there" I say in a hushed voice "and good luck."

"You too" he says stiffly.

I watch a group of men walk away with them, as we ready ourselves into position. We were going to take advantage of the attack and burst right on through the doors. We would have the element of surprise. Or at least, that's what I hoped.

A few minutes later, we heard the sounds of shouting, gunfire and saw smoke. That was our signal. Winter stepped beside me and together we shifted, King Axel doing the same as our men followed suit. We hit the ground running, paws thudding madly. I dodged and weaved as shifters and hunters fought each other, sometimes clawing and swiping to help as we ran through the crowd, heading straight for the two large doors at the very front of the building.

I don't even hesitate, ripping the doors off their hinges. There is startled shouting and some screams as I run inside, Winter and King Axel right behind me. I barrel right into a hunter and quickly tear their throat out

before they can even so much as reach for their weapon. I pause and survey the inside, seeing several doors leading to different rooms, a huge flurry of activity as the scientists in particular get up and run towards the exit, leaving the hunters behind.

"Fuck" shouts a hunter "shoot the bastards" he screams.

I take a move towards him, but see Winter's wolf barrel into him first, her claws swiping furiously, blood staining her fur as she continues to fight. It gives me time to pause, seeing my men and King Axel's dashing about madly as they worked in tandem to take down the hunters together.

I feel a hunter come up behind me and turn, growling furiously. He has his gun cocked to his shoulder, his eyes scanning my every move, a smirk on his face. One that won't be there for long, I might add. Because I jump as he pulls the trigger, the dart hitting the wall and bouncing off it as gouge him in the eyes and sink my teeth into his neck. I begin to drink, loving the taste of his blood, the sweetness of it, with the merest hint of tartness as an aftertaste. I drain the bastard dry and then let his body slump to the ground. In the background I can hear cries for help. I wonder where Johnathon is. He was supposed to come with us, but then I spot him at the large cages in the back, kneeling beside one in particular, looking frantic.

"Help" a woman is pleading weakly, Johnathon touching her hand. "Get us out of here" she begs.

I shift and grab hold of a scientist who is valiantly trying to sneak around me towards the exit. I grip him by the throat and squeeze, hard, making him gulp, his hands flailing uselessly at me. "Where are the keys?" I ask pleasantly, cocking my head at him and eyeing him with a hard expression on my face.

He swallows and then points with a shaking hand to the far corner, where a rather large and brutish looking man is frantically trying to leave, his hands shaking so much he can't get the door open.

"He has them" the scientist says weakly "he's the only one who is allowed to have them."

I drop the poor scientist to the floor and race towards the brutish man who turns and sees me coming. He renews his efforts but it's hopeless, even in human form I'm faster than the average human.

I swing my hand right at him and punch the man hard in the jaw as he turns. He stumbles back, a look of panic on his face. All around us are the sounds of shifters still fighting the hunters, and he turns pale as he sees what's happening around him still.

"What do you want" he stammers.

I narrow my eyes "the keys to the cages" I snarl, holding out my hand. This man is no hunter, but rather a military man, not used to fighting but merely issuing orders.

He reaches into his pocket and withdraws a ring of keys, plonking them in my hand. The silver burns, but I don't let him see that it bothers me and instead I punch him again, this time knocking the bastard unconscious as his body hits the wall and then the ground.

"Don't go anywhere" I mutter, walking away and heading towards Johnathon. Winter has joined him and is trying to reassure some of the children in the cages, which I was disgusted to see. It was one thing to take adults, but to experiment on children? Cowards.

Winter quickly takes hold of the keys, wincing as the silver burns her flesh. She opens the first cage and several small children come flying out, some sobbing as they hug her. I sniff. They aren't all shifter children, in fact, I was reasonably certain that at least two were vampires. Winter hands the keys to me and I open the next one, letting out a startled looking man, who was a bear shifter. He barely muttered a quick "thankyou" before he shifted and lumbered towards the hunters, one of whom let out

a shriek as he saw the large grizzly bear coming towards him. I grin. The bear joins in the fight, the shifters not even pausing as they continue. It's mayhem, but we were doing our jobs and getting out the prisoners. That's all that mattered.

The third cell held a bunch of angry looking vampires. I open the door and brace myself, after all vampires don't traditionally like shifters, but they all stay still, looking at each other. The man in the front finally steps forward, looking a bit apprehensive. He's dressed rather smartly for a vampire, in a suit, with smart polished shoes. I half suspect he might be part of the royal family.

"Many thanks" the vampire man says heartily, shooting his men a look "we are in your debt. If you would step aside, we would like to join in the fight."

I step aside as the vampires give each other thirsty grins. They saunter out and survey the scene, hands on hips. Then together they race towards several scientists. I open my mouth to object then shrug. For all I know the scientists experimented on these men and were getting their just desserts. Only one vampire male stays behind, going over to the children, in particular the two who smelt like them and hugged them tight.

"Daddy" they sobbed, the two little boys, faces creased in their upset, letting go of Winter.

Johnathon turns his head towards me. "Alpha Kai" he calls, his eyes looking at me anxiously "would you mind unlocking this door?" he adds, still kneeling beside it. I wonder at the strangeness of his voice, for its hoarse but also tight, like he's anxious about something. I move closer in curiosity. The cell contains one female, who is stunning with raven black hair and big blue eyes, her body naked, covered in an assortment of bruises and cuts. Even from here, I can see that she's had blood drawn at

the very least, needle marks in her arms. She looks terrified, even as Johnathon tries to reassure her that she is alright.

Winter quietly makes her way over. "You'll be alright" she whispers to the woman who is backed in the corner, crouching and trembling all over "we're here now."

"Hurry" hisses Johnathon. I frown at him but obligingly put the key in the lock as he watches, his jaw clenched tight. It's a shifter in the cell, that I can tell just by her scent. But from the way that Johnathon is acting, it was like he couldn't stand to see her in the cell for one more moment. I throw the door open and he quietly goes inside, careful to avoid the bars best he can as she stays there, her eyes wide, staring at him as he approaches. Winter places a hand on my arm, an intent look in her eyes. But none of us were expecting the word that came out of Johnathon's mouth just then, as he tenderly touched the woman's arm and looked into her eyes deeply.

That one word that he growled, as both Winter and I looked on in shock was "mate."