

## CHAPTER 155

Kai POV

The journey to the Prince's castle is arduous but full of excitement. When we pull up, I can't help but stare in awe as we all gather together outside of it. Prince Jasper's expression is smug, but also happy, grateful to be back home. We don't even make it two steps when guards suddenly appear, vampires of course, their red eyes glowing in the dark. Winter grabs hold of my hand and squeezes it, while King Axel merely examines his fingernails, not fussed in the least. Prince Jasper looks annoyed more than anything.

"Halt" says one of the guards gruffly "what is your business here, especially foul creatures such as yourselves."

King Axel gives a hiss and I notice his eyes turn pitch black at the insult. Prince Jasper looks incredulous.

"Do you not recognize your own prince" thunders Prince Jasper "apologize for that insult at once. These are good friends of mine."

The guards peer at him and then recognition dawns on the one who had insulted us shifters. He shifts uncomfortable on one foot.

"Prince Jasper, we had thought you to be dead" muttered the guard, blinking at us and offering a very insincere apology.

"Well, I'm not" huffed Prince Jasper and then motioned towards the other guards. "Inform the King and Queen I'm home" he says with a glare "and

take that guard" he points to the one who offered such a pathetic apology "to the dungeon for now."

The guard opens his mouth to protest, but the others drag him away, two others darting off, presumably to tell the queen and king their son had come home.

"I cannot abide rudeness to guests" Prince Jasper says when we glance at him "nor to me."

Seconds later, two more vampires come dashing out, despite the lateness of the hour. The woman, looks like Prince Jasper with the same hair color, clad in a long plait and sparkling blue eyes, which were currently brimming with tears. She wore a white nightgown, and a dressing gown over the top of it. The male, is tall and very forbidden looking, with brown eyes and a grim expression on his face. He's taller than me and well built. I cringe, wondering how they will take to shifters being visitors to their castle.

"Jasper" screams the woman, flinging herself at him.

Jasper catches her and hugs her tight, as she sobs on his shoulder.

"We thought you might be dead" she sniffles "we've been looking for you for months."

"I'm back mother, and it's all thanks to these people" he says, pointing at King Axel, Winter and myself "they saved me and a few others as well. They have my deepest gratitude and are here as my guests."

"Then you are most welcome and you have the gratitude from ourselves as well" says the man gruffly, patting Jasper on the back. "I am King Stefan and this is my wife, Queen Arabelle."

"It's a pleasure to meet you all" said Queen Arabelle, reluctantly stepping back from her son and regarding us with warm smiles. "I cannot thank you enough for saving my precious son."

She reaches out and hugs all of us. King Stefan offers us all a handshake.

"It is late and you are most certainly tired" Queen Arabelle says kindly, perhaps taking in Winter's pale pallor and slightly swaying body "let us show you to some rooms so that you might get some rest."

"Thank you very much" Winter says with some relief in her voice. She must be more tired than I thought.

The King and Queen are most gracious, showing us to our room, while King Axel is placed in one a little further along.

"I wish you all a very goodnight and will see you all in the morning" Prince Jasper says, shaking our hands again "do you require some food? Something to drink perhaps?"

Winter hesitates and Jasper sees it. "Maybe something simple like sandwiches?" she asks quietly "I have to admit I'm quite hungry."

"Consider it done" Jasper says with a twinkle in his eye, his mother nodding behind him with a wide smile.

We thank them all and close the door.

To my shock Winter instantly turns green and bolts towards the connecting bathroom, sinking to her knees and vomiting profusely into the toilet. Her body is shaking. I rush towards her, concerned out of my mind, wondering if the long drive had gotten to her. She continues to heave as I gently rub her back, the color completely gone from her face.

"Urgh" she groans, resting her head against the bowl "I think that's everything gone from my stomach."

I continue to rub her back.

"Was it the drive?" I asked " I would have stopped if you had told me, you were unwell."

She shakes her head, still looking incredibly pale and green.

"No, just feel a bit off. It wasn't the drive. Maybe after I have something to eat, it will be better."

"Maybe it was all the fighting we did?" I suggest.

She still looks hesitant.

Hey Kai, I think it might be something else. Do you remember when you were under Vanessa's spell? What you did.

Sort of. But I only remember bits and pieces. Not everything. Are you telling me you do Storm?

Not really, but I have a sneaking suspicion. If I'm right then....

If you loved it then you should have put a ring on it,

Seriously Storm. You're starting with this again!

I'm trying to give you a hint you stupid man. Oooh, why has the moon goddess cursed me with a man as dumb as you. She truly is a cruel woman.

Storm that's hurtful you know.

You're hurting me by being so dense. Why couldn't I have been the man, I'm so much better at it. Oh, the cruel, cruel world I'm forced to live in.

Stop being so damn melodramatic and pull yourself together already. Anyone would think you were hard done by. I'm insulted at how you talk to me.

That's it. I'm not telling you, figure it out yourself.

Storm puts a block up, utterly infuriated with me. Did I just lose an argument to my wolf! What the hell. I shake my head. The mutt better explain himself or so help me I'll. . .

What? Damnit, there was nothing I could do. I'm seething as I help Winter get to her feet. Now I also had that stupid song in my head. Thanks so much Storm.

There's a knock on the door and I sit Winter down on the large four poster bed, before crossing the bedroom and opening it. A woman in a maid's uniform stands there, looking hesitant, a large tray of sandwiches on her hand and a pitcher of fresh water in the other.

"Prince Jasper sent me to give you these" she says looking flustered.

I notice there's two glasses on the tray with sandwiches as well. Quickly I grab the tray off her, giving her a warm smile.

"Thankyou" I say, as she enters the room and quickly puts the pitcher on top of the dresser "we appreciate it. We know how late it is."

"Yes, thank you" says Winter weakly.

The woman gives us a friendly smile. "It's no problem at all" she tells us "Anything that the prince requires of us we do. It's our job. Is there anything else you might need?" she glances over at Winter who looks sickly.

"I think that's it" I check with Winter who gives a slow nod.

"My name is Sarah" she says, flipping her long red hair over her shoulder "I am happy to serve you. Miss, if you don't mind me asking, are you sure you don't want something to help with the nausea? Flat lemonade? Some crackers?"

Winter looks surprised. "How did you know I was feeling nauseas?" she asked.

"Your pallor. You smell like us vampires as well as like a shifter. We might be a pale species" she laughs "but your complexion is paler than the palest vampire and your body is shaking slightly" she finishes. She cocks her head and looks thoughtful.

I wonder what Sarah is thinking about, her green eyes beginning to sparkle, with just the merest hint of redness around them.

"I can also get a doctor for you if you require one" she suggests "the Prince has one on staff just for him, he won't mind if I wake him."

I glance at Winter.

Winter shakes her head, a rueful smile on her face. "Thank you but I would hate to wake someone from their slumber" she says politely "perhaps if I still feel sick tomorrow, I might take you up on your offer."

The woman brightens. "I will leave then. Goodnight" she calls over her shoulder, leaving briskly. I close the door and turn to Winter, the tray still in my hands.

I place it next to Winter, who grabs one and begins to slowly nibble on it, while I pour her a glass of fresh water and hand it to her. I then grab a sandwich and practically inhale it, starving hungry. Slowly Winter's color starts to come back and she happily drains the water. Between us, the tray of sandwiches is slowly demolished and I put the tray up on the dresser. Winter begins to yawn. Her eyelids are fluttering. She's sleepy. I guess food does that to a person, or it's the lateness of the hour. She stands up, swaying and I quickly pull back the lush bed covers. She climbs in, curling up on her side and I rush to the bathroom and do my business, before coming back to the bed. In that short amount of time, Winter has fallen fast asleep, snoring gently as I smile and chuckle to myself. She's so

adorable, so cute. She also looks like she belongs there as I climb in beside her. I frown, something suddenly coming to my mind as my whole body stiffens.

Images in my mind of myself under Vanessa's spell. I'm walking to Winter's room, with a purpose, one that Vanessa had given to me. Then it cuts to me sleeping with Winter, but confused because I'm imagining it's Vanessa, not sure what I'm doing. Just that it has to be done. The look on Winter's face when I called her Vanessa, cuts through me deeply. I should have fought harder not to be under that witch's spell. God, I was a right bastard. But why had I gone to Winter's room in the first place? What was the mission that Vanessa had given me?

I look down at Winter and slowly sniff, realizing for the first time that her scent has changed once again. There's the merest hint of something else, but it's so subtle you wouldn't even realize it was there unless you were specifically looking for it. I close my eyes, sniffing deeply, no longer puzzled at the change, but angry at myself for not realizing this sooner. Then again, what if Winter didn't know or realize yet? With the stress of everything going on, could it have possibly slipped her mind? She was showing all the signs now that I thought about it. The vomiting, the pale complexion, the tiredness. But what if I was wrong? I take a deep breath. This could wait until the morning, but there was a rising excitement inside of me, although the circumstances in which it happened made me feel incredibly guilty. I was a horrible mate, I could accept that. I needed to do something to make Winter forgive me for everything that happened. But what? Nothing would take those memories away. She would have them until the end of time.

Then make a new memory you dumbass. Christ, how have you survived as a man this long? It baffles the mind.

Ah there's the Storm I know and love.

Yeah, baby. Now, think hard and do something incredible for Winter. Who knows, maybe Prince Jasper will be able to help. Also, yes, you dumb man. She's pregnant with our pup. I suggest you get a doctor to check her tomorrow. I suppose you're capable of that at least. My pup is going to be glorious and beautiful with Winter as it's mother. I can't wait to see her belly grow swollen with our child. Winter is going to be a stunning and wonderful mother. You though, I suppose you won't be the worst father in the world.

Gee thanks Storm.

It was a compliment.

Didn't feel like one.

I could take it back?

Alright, alright, goodnight, Storm.

Night, man.

I close my eyes content for the first time in a long time, my arm snaking around Winter as I pull her close to me, reveling in the feel of her in my arms, picturing her body and her swollen belly as she gets more pregnant. Soon, I fall asleep, my mind awirl with plans and possibilities.