

CHAPTER 164

Winter POV

I've never felt so nervous before in my life. Behind me, Willow gives a wide smile, pausing to glance at me in my dress.

"You look beautiful Winter" she says warmly, her voice full of approval.

I look in the mirror, staring at my reflection, my hand automatically going to my swollen stomach. I barely recognize the woman looking back at me.

My ice blonde hair is tied up in an elaborate updo, thanks to Willow's efforts, curls dangling down my neck. My dress is a cream color with a sweetheart neckline and no straps, coming in tight underneath the bodice but flowing out, over my baby bump. I wear some nice bejeweled flat sandals to go with and I'm wearing a simple locket as my jewelry, that finishes just above my cleavage. Kai had given it to me and it was sentimental to me. It was the only thing I wanted to wear, along with a tiara to hold my hair in place.

Willow was to be my only bridesmaid, wearing a lovely pale pink dress that had spaghetti straps and flowed down her lithe body. Her hair was in a simple ponytail with ringlets and she looked divine. She'd helped me get dressed and ready and I couldn't be more thankful for her calming presence. I felt a small pain in my back and ignored it. It was most likely Braxton hicks, something that had happened several times in the last month. I heard a knock on the door and called out "come in", Simon opening the door and poking his head through.

"Are you ready yet Winter?" he asked with a smile, looking eager.

I give a small nod. I'm nervous as all hell. Simon can sense it, because he bounds over and gives me a hug, careful to avoid squishing my large stomach. "You look gorgeous" he says, and I relax.

Simon is such a sweetheart. "I'll go and get Drake and Damien" he murmurs and darts back out the door, in his suit, looking extremely adorable.

Milly wanders in, wearing a cute pink flower girl dress to match Willow. Her blonde hair is tied back and she's wearing the cutest white sandals with the dress. She holds a basket of rose petals in one hand and is beaming from ear to ear. Jinx walks in behind her, fidgeting with his vest that goes with the suit he's wearing. He looks uncomfortable, but smiles at me happily.

"Winter is beautiful" Milly informs Jinx, who nods and takes my hand.

I smile down at the two little cherubs.

Damien and Drake come sauntering in, both clad in matching suits, their hair neatly groomed back, looking comfortable and extremely handsome. Langdon was with Kai, his best man of course. But I had wanted my brothers to walk me down the aisle, as they were far better than a father in my eyes.

"Well shall we go?" asks Drake, taking hold of an excited Milly's hand.

"Um guys" I say quietly, seeing how nervous Sarah is "where's Johnathon?"

"Here" blurts out a panting voice.

I frown at Johnathon who looks a bit out of breath, adjusting his tie, his face slightly flushed. "Sorry, sorry, I took a little long to get ready" he

pants, rushing towards his mate who looks very relieved "but I'm here now."

"Brilliant, now can we go" blurts out Damien.

I scowl at him but give a small nod. Together we all walk down the stairs, the inside of the pack house decorated with flowers everywhere for this auspicious occasion. At the front door is a table, laden with bouquets and buttonholes for the men. I grab hold of my bouquet, purple, pink and white silk flowers, while Willow is handed hers by Johnathon. Milly's given a small one and Damien puts Jinx buttonhole on for him. We were all ready and my nerves were feeling shot.

It was time. My heart was pounding wildly in my chest. I felt frozen in fear. If it wasn't for Sabriel's quiet encouraging voice in my ear, I might never have gathered up the courage to continue. As it was, I heard the music start in the distance and knew that someone had mind-linked Kai to begin. Drake opened the front door and a white runner ran from the length of it to an archway further up where Kai and Langdon were waiting for me. Milly went first, hand in hand with Jinx, swinging her basket around and flinging rose petals everywhere, including on some unfortunate guests. Willow was next and she sashayed down the aisle, holding tightly to Johnathon's hand, keeping in time to the music, until she reached the archway and then she separated from Johnathon, going to the opposite side and waiting, while Johnathon joined Kai and Langdon.

Simon, Drake and Damien stood beside me on each side, looking proud as punch. "Winter, are you sure about this?" asked Drake softly "because if you have any doubts at all, say the word and we'll whisk you out of here, faster than you can blink."

I have to admit that I appreciate the sentiment. They are overprotective of me but I love it. Even Simon is. We've gotten close over the last few months. But all I could think about was Kai and how he was waiting for

me. I might be scared but I had no doubts about what I was doing. I had wanted this more than anything.

We all link arms and begin to walk down the aisle, my hands clutching my bouquet tightly. The pains in my back have continued, but I grit my teeth and smile, willing the pain to go away. For Braxton hicks they sure are persistent. I stare at Kai, taking in his handsome face and the tuxedo he's wearing. He's slicked his hair back and his scars stood out as a result, but I didn't mind. His scars were a part of him and I thought they just made him look even manlier. Not that I was going to tell him that of course. He was fidgeting slightly, but I saw his eyes widen as he saw me and then he puffed his chest out and stood tall.

The minister stood a little distance away, watching the proceedings with a bemused smile on his face. Damien, Drake and Simon all stop as we reach the archway. Damien gives me a hug and a kiss on the cheek "I love you little sis" he tells me, joining Langdon.

Drake does the same "love you" he murmurs in my ear, hugging me tight.

Simon gives me the last hug and a hasty peck on the forehead. "You are stunning" he whispers, darting off to join his brothers past the archway.

I finish the walk alone, Kai reaching out a trembling hand and gathering me close. Ignoring the minister completely, he leans down and gives me a kiss, pressing his lips gently to mine, one hand sweeping a stray curl of my hair back over my ear. The crowd begins to whoop and holler in excitement, while my brothers merely look amused at the situation.

"Ahem" coughs the minister, forcing myself and Kai to pull back reluctantly "perhaps we could get through the ceremony first" he suggests smiling.

I blush; Kai just laughs out loud. "By all means minister go ahead" he encourages, tucking me under his arm. I have to push him a little to walk over to poor Willow who's all alone, turning around to face him. Kai sighs.

Man, that minister is a bit of a party pooper isn't he? Would it have hurt to let you guys kiss just a little more? Prude.

I don't think he was being prudish Sabriel, I agree, we should have waited until the ceremony was over.

Where's the fun in that? Besides Kai looks do damn fine girl. I just want to jump him, oooh those muscles of his, I'm drooling over here.

Well, that's all you're going to be doing. I'm not jumping my mate during a wedding for heaven's sake.

It would give the guests something to remember. It's not like shifters are prudes.

Yeah, no. Thanks but no thanks Sabriel, you'll just have to keep your horniness to yourself.

Fine, but that man's getting lucky tonight, I'm warning you.

Warning received, now shush.

"Ladies and gentleman, we are gathered here today, to witness the union between Winter and Kai" begins the minister, oblivious to my small discussion with Sabriel. I barely hear the rest of the words, the pain in my back intensifying to my displeasure. It distracted me somewhat from the ceremony as I forced myself to keep a fake smile on my face and to prevent myself from wincing or grimacing in pain, which would have just freaked Kai out. We exchanged rings and spoke our vows, myself feeling a little on autopilot, time passing by in a whirl. Before I knew it, the minister was finally saying "you may now kiss your bride."

The crowd cheered as Kai grabbed me and pulled me in, kissing me a little more passionately, his tongue delving inside my mouth as I felt butterflies in my stomach. The sparks were flying between us and I gripped his arms tightly, reveling in the feel of his body and his muscles. He was so strong and yet he treated me so gently.

"Alright, enough" Langdon says from behind Kai, laughing a little "you still have a reception to get through."

I blink, somewhat in a daze and pull back, looking over to see that most of the crowd have dispersed over to the marquee where we were holding the reception. "Oops" I mutter sheepishly.

Milly giggles, dropping her basket and dancing around, Jinx awkwardly trying to copy her. Willow gives us a small wave and points at the marquee as I nod, Johnathon walking beside her.

"I'm not sorry" Kai says indignantly, glaring at Langdon "she's, my wife. I mean look at her, she's absolutely gorgeous, like a damn goddess. How am I supposed to resist that?"

I almost glow from the compliment.

"You'll have plenty of time to do that after the reception" Langdon shoots back, his tone brooking no arguments. He folds his arm and stares Kai down.

"Fine" grumbles Kai "you're no fun" he sulks as I giggle.

Damien and Drake take hold of Milly and Jinx, beginning to walk to the marquee. Damien calls over his shoulder "see you in there" with a wide grin on his face. The children are squirming in excitement, Damien and Drake having to hold them rather tightly from what I could see.

"I want to offer my congratulations to you both" Langdon says pleasantly, giving me a hug and a kiss on both cheeks while Kai glowers at him.

"Thank you, Langdon," I tell him sincerely.

He turns and shakes Kai's hand, before giving him a heartfelt hug as well.

He was just about to turn away when a sharp pain shot through me and I doubled over groaning. I feel something wet and sticky dripping down my leg and Kai gives a loud shout.

"Kai" I say weakly, staring down at myself in shock, feeling his arms around me as he picks me up and cradles me tightly to his chest "my water just broke."

"I can see that" he says tightly as I begin to let out a scream, feeling a contraction hit me "why didn't you say anything you fool?"

Langdon is already rushing to the marquee to alert my brothers and help with Milly and Jinx.

"I didn't want to ruin the wedding" I tell him feeling like an idiot. "Plus, I thought it was Braxton hicks."

The pain was excruciating, but the contractions were far apart, so I knew we had time. Still, Kai started to break into a jog, ignoring the fact I was leaking everywhere. There was a grim expression on his face, but his eyes softened as he stared at me. "Today we'll have two things to remember" he mutters "our wedding anniversary and possibly the same night you gave birth to our children."

Epilogue

Winter POV

The pain came in waves, excruciating, my lips were curled back in a silent scream, as I hung on to Kai's hand for dear life. He winced from the pain and I was fairly certain I might have broken his hand, but he never once complained. His hair was disheveled and his clothes wrinkled from jogging to the hospital. Outside, my brothers waited patiently, along with Milly, Jinx and Langdon, but all I could focus on was the fact the babies were coming, on the very same day as our wedding.

"You can do this Winter" encouraged Kai, squeezing my hand.

I tried not to glare at him hatefully; it was partially his fault I was in pain. Instead, I tried to focus on what it would feel like to have our babies in our arms. I was clad in a hospital gown and covered in sweat. It had been several hours since we'd made it here and now it was night time. I writhed on the bed, uncomfortable, the pain in my back and stomach intensifying as the contractions got closer together.

"It hurts" I moan to Dr Renae who looks at me with encouragement.

"I know honey, I can give you some more painkillers but you're so far along now, that it might not take effect."

I shake my head wearily. There was no point to having them then.

My legs were spread wide apart; my back arched with every contraction. I felt an overwhelming need to push.

"I need to push" I grunt and Dr Renae quickly checks to see how dilated I am.

I don't even flinch this time.

"You're fully dilated Winter, so I want you to push with the next contraction, alright. Push down as hard as you can."

I nod, panting heavily, feeling miserable and yet elated at the same time.

"Push" she orders and I push, hard, down, screaming.

"Now relax" I do.

"Push" another push down, while Kai looks on with wide eyes, taking everything in. Thankfully he remains by my head and continues to hold my hand.

"The baby is crowning Winter, so I think if you give a massive push this time, the baby will come out. Can you do that."

"I can try" I mutter, tired beyond all reason.

I was exhausted.

The next contraction hit and I screamed, putting all my energy into pushing down, Dr Renae giving a triumphant shout.

"I have her" she crows, quickly passing our baby off to the nurse who is waiting patiently.

I watch with glistening eyes as the nurse takes the child and begins to check her vitals. I know this means my son is now waiting to be born.

I cry out with the next contraction and Dr Renae quickly gets ready.

"This baby is crowning Winter. I know you're tired and exhausted, but you can do this and then you can hold your precious babies in your arms."

"Let's get our son out" Kai says with a smile, stroking my hair.

I push down with all my strength with the next contraction, but it's not enough.

"That's alright Winter, we can push again in a moment, get your strength back" Dr Renae says calmly.

I push again, hard, straining, and then stop, crying.

"It hurts so bad and I'm so tired" I whisper, and Kai kisses me lovingly on the forehead.

Dr Renae looks slightly anxious. "One big push honey, alright. Let's get this done."

I push, hard, but as before I stop before it happens, tired and losing what little strength I do have."

Dr Renae looks concerned. "Winter, I'm going to have to help you get this baby out. You're losing strength quickly. I'm going to use forceps to help you, is that okay?"

I nod. I would accept any help she was willing to give. My whole body was in pain and sweat was dripping off my forehead and onto the bedsheets.

She disappears for a moment. The nurse is still holding our baby girl, watching the proceedings.

Dr Renae comes back and sits down. "Alright honey, with the next push, I'm going to use these forceps to help, but you still need to push" she warns me.

I nod.

The next contraction hits and I bear down, automatically, screaming loudly, as Dr Renae uses the forceps to help me give birth to mine and kai's son.

I collapse back on the bed, Dr Renae checking the baby's vitals, while the nurse approaches the bed with our daughter, holding her out to Kai.

Kai gingerly takes our daughter into his arms. I peer over with tired eyes. She's beautiful. Her complexion is a perfect porcelain color, her eyes are a stunning blue color and she has a small amount of blonde fuzz on her head. Her little fingers touch Kai and he looks absolutely stunned, cradling her close to his chest, blinking back tears from his eyes. He was in love immediately with her.

"Do you want to hold her" he asks me softly, and I sit up, reaching my hands out to take her.

He gently places her in my arms and I stare down at her in awe, looking at the most precious thing I've ever seen. She's adorable, so tiny and yet perfect. She has little wrinkles on her fingers and toes. She takes my breath away.

Dr Renae comes over with our son in her arms, a wide smile on her face. "Would you like to hold him?"

Kai eagerly reaches out for him, showing him to me as he holds our son. He looks a lot like Kai, his hair definitely darker than blonde, with big brown eyes. His skin is slightly darker, not by much, but enough that it's not a porcelain complexion. He's slightly bigger than his sister as well. Kai is enamored with him.

"I can't believe it, a daughter and a son" he murmurs to me, cradling the baby boy and smiling lovingly down at him.

"Winter, how would you like to get cleaned up, while daddy here watches over the babies?" asks Dr Renae kindly.

I would love nothing more than to get clean, with a shower and fresh clothes instead of the hospital gown. The nurse wheels in two bassinets for the babies and I reluctantly put down our daughter.

"We'll put fresh sheets on the bed for you while you shower" Dr Renae says, helping me out of the bed and steering me to the bathroom. "Now can you shower by yourself or do you need help?"

There's a shower seat in the bathroom, so I figure I'll be fine. "I'll shower on my own" I tell her as she fetches my toiletries bag with clothes for myself in it. I take it in and then get undressed shakily, taking a quick shower. I can distantly hear the sound of my children crying in the room.

I dress slowly, putting on pads with my underwear, but feel surprisingly refreshed now that I was clean. I slowly walk back into the room and see that the bed has been remade and that Kai is looking slightly panicked. I climb onto the bed and Dr Renae approaches me. "I think they might be hungry" she says quietly "would you like some help getting them positioned?"

I accept the help gratefully and open up my shirt, made specifically for breastfeeding, exposing my breasts to the slightly chilly air. My daughter is put on my left breast, her little mouth opening and closing as she searches for the nipple. Then she clamps on and I wince slightly, before Dr Renae brings over a pillow along with my son, helping him to lie down towards my other breast. He clamps on immediately and both of them begin to suck as I look down, pride in my eyes.

"What are the names you two chose for them?" asks Dr Renae, grabbing hold of her clipboard.

Kai and I glance at each other.

"Scarlet for the girl" I answer "her middle name is Harmony"

"Rohan for the boy" Kai says with a grin "middle name Langdon."

Dr Renae smiles. "I'll get your birth certificate prepared then. Would you like me to send in the people in the waiting room? They're getting mighty impatient to see you and the babies" she jokes.

I laugh out loud. "Yes please."

Scarlet and Rohan continue to suckle, clearly hungry. Within minutes my brothers, Langdon, Milly and Jinx are entering the room.

"Is that the babies?" asks Milly in a whisper to Drake.

He picks Milly up so that she can see a little better. "See, a baby girl and a baby boy" he points out.

Damien reaches over and tentatively gives me a hug, trying not to crush his niece and nephew. Langdon shakes Kai's hand.

"Congratulations" Langdon tells him and me, a wide smile on his face.

"What are their names?" asks Jinx, by my elbow.

"Scarlet Harmony and Rohan Langdon" I answer.

Langdon is silent for a moment, looking touched. I swear I saw him blinking back tears. His voice is gruff when he speaks. "You named one of them after me?" he asks Kai.

"You're my best mate, so of course I did. Not to mention they are going to be your niece and nephew. I want you and Damien and Drake and Simon to be the godparents" Kai answers "Winter too of course."

They all look moved. "It would be my honor" Langdon says enthusiastically.

"Mine too" Drake says

Simon looks slightly overwhelmed.

Damien just nods, looking like he's about to cry. I know we've come a far way since we were younger and we've grown as brother and sister on this journey.

All of them gaze at their niece and nephew. I can't help it, but yawn as tiredness overtakes me.

"I think we'll take our leave and visit again tomorrow" Langdon tells us "When you're a little less tired."

They all offer their congratulations and then file back out the room, Milly and Jinx waving wildly. I laugh.

"They are so beautiful and so are you" Kai tells me, staring in awe at the babies who were still suckling greedily at my nipples.

"You know our life is about to change completely" I warn him, leaning back against the bed, careful not to shift the babies.

He grins. "I wouldn't have it any other way" he boasts "I love you and I love them. For now, and forever" he promised, meaning every single word.

"I love you too" I told him "And I'm ready for what life's about to throw at us."

Life became chaotic and a handful, but we wouldn't have had it any other way, living like the family I had always dreamed of having.

Damien, Drake and Langdon ended up adopting Milly and Jinx for their own. They were unable to locate any family members unfortunately, but the children adored them and they ended up being a perfect little family, loved and cherished by their father's. Eventually, Langdon married both Damien and Drake, in a beautiful ceremony that Kai and I attended. Milly

was the flower girl of course and Jinx was the little ring bearer. They also ended up becoming foster parents, adopting several orphans over the years and extending their family.

Simon lived with Drake and Damien until he grew old enough to travel, deciding he wanted to travel the world as a back packer at aged eighteen. I spent a lot of time with him, but he adored living with his older brothers and helping them with the children they fostered, as well as Milly and Jinx. When he came back, he helped with training pack members as his job, hoping one day to meet his mate and have a family of his own. Eventually he did, his mate Lacey a stunning girl who visited with her father and stayed. Simon had children of his own and they too, stayed at our pack.

Johnathon and Willow eventually tied the knot and started a small family. Unfortunately, his mother never accepted Simon and Johnathon was forced to visit Simon here, on the odd occasional visit whenever he could spare the time. Something that as an Alpha was increasingly difficult. His relationship with Simon was good but not as close as Simon would have liked, not that he blamed Johnathon for it.

King Axel and Sarah started a family at the castle, but only after taking several trips to different countries and travelling between each pack. The last I heard, they were planning on getting married but had yet to do it. I wished them all the happiness in the world. After his debacle with Vanessa, he more than deserved a loving mate and family.

The End.