

CHAPTER 93

Winter POV

It's dark. That's the first thing I notice when I open my eyes. My eyelids feel gritty and I wipe them with the back of my hand, cursing at the feeling of silver restraints preventing me from doing much else. Fuck. This is bringing back some horrible memories of the last time, but when I glance around, there's no one there. I don't know where I am, let alone how far we travelled but something tells me it had to have been a fair distance. My bracelet has been taken by Thomas, the one that Kai gave me.

Hopefully Kai has noticed I've gone missing but I'm not sure how well they'll do at tracking me when Thomas can move so unbelievably fast. He's twice as fast, maybe triple what a shifter is. I scan the room and frown puzzled. There's pews sitting in the room and when I try to whip my head around, I can see an altar of some kind sitting there, a large cross in the background. There are candles burning in the far corner, but other than that, there's no other lighting at all.

Where the fuck am I? I suck in a breath as realization dawns. I'm in a church, Thomas has taken me to a fucking church. I can't even tell if it's abandoned or if he's killed anyone that lives here. I desperately hope it's the former. Maybe he's just brought me here to sleep? But my heart is thumping wildly in my chest and my mouth feels incredibly dry. I'm so thirsty and my stomach is growling with hunger. How much time has passed since Thomas kidnapped me?

My legs are chained together and I hiss, uncomfortable as the silver digs into my skin, burning it. Still, I struggle and persevere, managing to get to my feet without toppling over. A small success. I try to mind-link Sabriel. She answers immediately.

Winter, you don't have much time until Thomas comes back. I don't know if this is a good idea.

What do you want me to do Sabriel? Lie back down and just wait for him to come back, to do God knows what to us? No way, I'd rather die.

I'm sure Kai is trying to track us down. He knows we're missing by now, and don't forget that Damien, Johnathon and even Langdon will be out searching for us.

I still don't want to rely on them to save me Sabriel, I'm kind of getting sick of it to be honest.

Don't talk like that. There's nothing wrong with needing help Winter. It doesn't make you weak.

But it makes me feel weak Sabriel and I'm tired of feeling that way.

She says nothing more to me but I can sense her anxiety as I do an awkward hop towards the pews. I have no plan, other than to get the hell out of there before Thomas comes back from wherever the hell he's gone. I make it halfway, cursing, panting, sweat dripping off my forehead, when I sense I'm not alone. Fuck. I waited too long, took too much time. I raise my head as the doors bang wide open, two red glowing eyes glaring at me. I swallow nervously and lose my balance, toppling over face first. Sabriel was right. I should have just waited instead of trying to escape.

I give an angry shriek as Thomas picks me up like a sack of potatoes and deposits me, hard, back in my original location as I scowl up at him. He looks pissed off. He's also clutching a grocery bag in his hand. I really

hope that his eyes weren't glowing while he was supposedly shopping or stealing. For all I know we're residing in a human town.

"Seriously Winter" he barks "you try to escape the second I'm gone" he explodes.

I cringe from the anger in his voice. But what does he honestly expect from me? To lie still and be a good little prisoner?

"Here" he mutters, throwing the bag at my feet.

I look at him tentatively and reluctantly reach for it. There's a bottle of water and a bagel in it. I eye it, my mouth watering as Thomas folds his arms over his chest.

"It's not poisoned" he says when I shoot him a suspicious glance.

I debate my options. I can't trust Thomas, but my stomach hurts, it's in that much hunger. The water bottle looks relatively safe, and I unscrew the lid and take a good long swallow, feeling the coldness against my dry throat in welcome relief. The bagel looks alright to me and I tentatively take a bite, almost moaning from the taste of it, my stomach churning in appreciation.

I swallow the food and take another bite, Thomas's eyes on me the entire time.

"Thomas" I rasp out, finishing the last few bites of bagel and feeling satisfied, even though I'm not completely full "why am I here? It's not to be friends so spit it out" I almost snarl, my temper igniting again. Sabriel is still quiet in my mind and it's a little disheartening. Is she really that afraid of Thomas?

"Of course it's not to be friends" Thomas laughs lightly, sounding incredulous and giving me a disbelieving look. "I want so much more than that" he growls coming closer. My heart sinks. I thought this might be the

case, but to hear it come from his lips is causing me to become paralyzed with fear.

My heart beats painfully, reminding me that for now, I am still alive. He comes close and I shiver as he reaches over and grasps a large chunk of my hair, sniffing it and giving a low growl. "You smell so nice" he almost purrs and I shudder "but then you always did smell so sweet to me" he says cocking his head. "Like a meadow of flowers. Not like all those other girls" he scowls "they just reek of cheap perfume and cigarettes. By the way you can thank me" he adds and I stare at him confused.

"I know what the girls did to you" he says softly "the way they tried to kill you for my supposed death? Jessica was the main culprit, wasn't she? I took care of her for you."

I feel bile rising up in my throat and close my eyes, forcing myself to breathe and not throw up the meagre contents of my stomach.

"What do you mean, you took care of her?" I ask and he gives a small chuckle.

"I guess I have to spill it out for you" he says amused "I killed her and not quickly either. I did it before I actually left our small town" he says calmly "which is why it took a little longer to get here. I had to hide the body and the evidence. You should have seen the look on her face, when she saw me. She was so happy" he chortled, shaking his head "and then when she realized why I was there, well" he paused "then you should have heard her screams. Ah they were delightful" he murmurs "worth being a little longer so that I can show you how much I love you."

I stare at him horrified. He killed Jessica. I can't believe it. As much as I had hated that bitch, she hadn't deserved to die at Thomas's hand on my behalf. I can't even imagine the torture he would have put her through either. I can't help it; I lean over to the side and puke my guts up while Thomas hastily backs away and wrinkles his nose.

"Winter" he admonishes me and I look at him helplessly as he wipes my mouth with the back of his shirt and gives me more water. Tears prick the corner of my eyes.

"I also thought I took care of your damn brother" swears Thomas "but I should have been more careful. I saw him, and that annoying son of a bitch Johnathon at the pack. I'm not stupid, not to mention the Alpha and you."

"The Alpha and me" I say quietly and watch his eyes go even redder.

"Your mates, aren't you" he spits out, his hands clenching into fists "I saw the way you looked at each other when you thought it was safe. I see the mark on you" he hisses "I can't believe you would betray me like that" he whispers.

I haven't betrayed you, you psychotic son of a bitch, I want to yell out loud, but instead I bite my lip and look away, Thomas breathing heavily in what I'm hoping is an attempt to calm the hell down.

"It doesn't matter" he murmurs "I can undo the mark and we can still be together. You will be my chosen mate" he vows and I look at him panicked.

What did he mean by removing or undoing my mark? That's impossible, isn't it? He had to be lying, trying to scare me, I decide, but a small part of me isn't so sure. Especially with the way he's licking his lips.

His fangs slowly come out of hiding and gleam in the darkness with the candlelight flickering over them. It's almost like being trapped inside a horror movie. He cocks his head at me as my eyes widen.

"Thomas we can work this out" I plead desperately, hoping to distract him.

"We are working this out" he mutters "don't think that I'm not aware you're being tracked" he snaps "by that precious Alpha mate of yours and that annoying brother. They're ruining my plans" he snarls.

I try to back away but can't as he kneels over me. He licks his lips again. "I'm hungry" he whispers "and I want that mark gone Winter. You're only going to bear my mark for now and forever" he says vehemently.

I stare at him, tears trailing down my cheeks. "Thomas, don't do this to me" I beg "please, don't drain my blood."

He laughs, loudly, his head thrown back. "I'm not going to drain your blood" he sneers "I just want a taste, plus I need to bite you, to mark you" he growls.

I feel his hand grip the back of my neck as I begin to sob, his grip strong enough that I can't move as he pushes my head to the side, exposing the nape of my neck to him. He trails a finger down it, tracing my mark as I sob.

"Don't worry" he whispers, in an effort to be reassuring "it will only hurt for a minute" he promises. I say nothing, trying to wriggle my body but it doesn't do any good. His grip is just too strong. I feel ashamed. Kai is going to be upset if our mark is removed. It was his official claim on me, and I treasure it.

I feel his fangs slowly piercing me, right in the center of the mark, Thomas biting down as I shriek at him to stop. Pain floods my body as I feel him sucking at my blood, his hand never once moving. It's excruciating. It feels like I'm slowly dying. How much blood is he going to take? I'm so hazy now. My entire body is tense though as he continues to make small moans as he feeds on me.

"So delicious" he mutters, and to my relief I feel his fangs slowly withdrawing, the pain slowly fading along with. I shudder at the feel of

his coarse tongue on my skin as he seals the wound closed. I frantically look at the nape of my neck and my heart skips a beat. Kai's mark is gone. It's completely gone and instead there are puncture marks on my neck. Thomas looks pleased. "Now all I have to do is bite you with my shifter teeth and you're mine" he crows.

I'm in shock, my body feeling like it's floating. I make a strangled noise, one of anguish as I fall face down to the floor. Thomas rolls me over and all I see is his eyes looking down at me. "I forgot to mention that it will make you pass out again" he says nonchalantly as I close my eyes in resignation. The last thing I hear before I succumb to the darkness surrounding me, is his voice "get ready because I want you to perform the ceremony when she wakes up."