

Psycho Shifters Chapter 6

SADIE

MONSTERS EVERYWHERE

Something hard pushed against my back. Instantly, I was awake.

D~~k's favorite time to torment me had been in the middle of the night, and my body had adjusted accordingly.

I barely slept, and any sound woke me up.

Now the bedroom door slowly pushed open and bit into my back.

I calmed my breathing and inched backward. The numb wasn't available because it was recharging.

Panic made my hands shake.

Moonlight cast shadows around the room.

I quietly picked the large butcher knife off the ground. I stole it from the dining hall last night for protection.

The door creaked open slowly, and I scooted out of its way.

Quietly, I climbed to my feet and tiptoed backward.

The butcher knife shook in my hand, and I pretended the numb was coursing through my veins.

Instead, pure terror made my palms sweat.

The numb would tell me to remain perfectly still and use the element of surprise to my advantage.

My un-numbed brain was telling me to scream like a maniac and run for my life.

Breathing deeply, I tried to channel my calm alter ego.

Unfortunately, no matter how hard I concentrated, the calm wouldn't come.

Suddenly, the door slammed open, and the scent of burned smoke choked my senses.

A large figure barreled into the room and pummeled a fist into my face.

My nose b~t, and agony stabbed through my skull.

Lights flashed in my eyes.

In the midst of sheer terror, annoyance flared hot and heavy.

My body was already hideously scarred, and at this rate, my naturally small nose was going to be a crooked mess. Could the universe not let me have anything?

Before I could punch back, my attacker tackled me onto the floor.

All air left my lungs as the much larger weight knocked the wind out of me.

He pinned me to the ground with his massive frame.

Eyes watering from shock, I slammed my right fist repeatedly into their kidney.

Over and over, I pounded my knuckles against his flesh.

They reared back with their fist, and moonlight highlighted a bushy beard and cruel eyes.

It was the beta who had stared at me.

“Why?” My rough voice was too loud in the quiet room.

Instead of answering, he slammed his fist into my nose.

The pain of him smashing my already broken nose was overwhelming, and I screamed in agony.

My mangled voice barely made a sound.

I had screamed so much growing up that I had shredded my voice box. Now screaming was impossible.

When the haze of pain lessened, rage mixed with the agony.

The gross beard quivered against my chin as the beta leaned closer to me. Warm spittle sprayed my face.

“I know you’re a pathetic servant. I’m a friend of D~k’s and recognized you. You don’t belong in a war camp. You’re no alpha. You’re a little b~h, and I’m going to prove it. And when everyone finds out how weak and pathetic you truly are, they’ll thank me for raping you. A woman can’t be an alpha.” He smiled with pure joy.

My stomach rolled at his words.

A cold sweat broke out across my body, and I became hyperaware of where the beta’s heavy body pressed against my own.

Just hearing D~k’s name filled me with terror.

My attacker thrust his h~s forward insidiously, and I tasted bile in the back of my throat. For a second, panic consumed me, and I couldn’t move.

Every muscle in my body froze.

“Like that, little servant b~h?” He pawed at my chest cruelly with his hand.

The room spun around me as panic made me weak. Before I passed out, or sunk deeper into terror, I reminded myself to use the element of surprise.

I had kept my left hand tucked into my sweatpants for a reason.

What would the numb do?

Somehow, I found the strength to pull my left hand out of my pocket, where I had hidden the weapon.

I sliced the butcher knife across his face.

Deep.

Cheek to cheek, the blade split his face. Hot blood flowed over me in a gross waterfall.

A severed tongue fell out of his mouth, and it flopped onto the ground beside my head with a squish.

“You won’t be telling anyone shit,” I whispered. My voice was overpowered by the gagging noises coming from the beta’s mouth. The moonlight cast menacing shadows.

The room spun as I drowned in blood.

My attacker scrambled off me and clutched at his mutilated face.

If I were numb, I would have pushed to my feet and calmly cleaned myself off.

I was the opposite of numb.

Terror, fear, and shock burned through me like fire.

The blood triggered memories, and suddenly, it wasn’t a beta’s blood. It was my own.

Once again, I drowned in the past.

D~~k stood above me in the middle of the night. I lay on the floor and tried to pull my one blanket up to protect myself. I begged and cried, pleaded with him to spare me.

“You fuckin’ think you can spill my drinks and backtalk to my patrons? You ungrateful w~~~e. If it wasn’t for me, you’d be dead,” D~~k said.

“He groped me first. I just told him not to touch me.” I was only eight. Sally at the bar had told me I was much too young for men to be touching me. She hadn’t had to warn me.

Men were all large and scary. They used their fists and hurt those weaker than them. D~~k had shown me that.

“What you did was disrespect me,” D~~k growled, and there was a rasp as he pulled off his belt. The heavy hardware clicked menacingly.

The first slam of the belt across my back made me yell in surprise.

By the tenth stroke, I was screaming in agony. D~~k used his beta strength to keep me pinned to the floor. His clammy left hand pushed me facedown by the neck. D~~k’s right hand was merciless with the belt.

By the fifteenth stroke, the scent of my blood overwhelmed my senses. Blood was everywhere. It wasn't the first time he'd beaten me.

"Sadie, snap out of it!" Zed screamed and shook my shoulder. His thin face and dark hair filled my vision.

Blinking away awful memories, I remembered with relief that D~~k wasn't beating me.

I was free of him.

Unfortunately, I also remembered I had just slit a man's tongue from his mouth and his blood was splattered across my face.

I looked around. My beta attacker was gone, but his blood still covered the floor.

Cobra leaned against the wall and stared at me with a frosty expression.

He turned and slipped out of the room.

I stared down at the blood covering my hands and the floor.

Was it possible to have another panic attack during a panic attack? Because I was in the middle of one.

My chest squeezed, and I couldn't draw air through my lungs.

Slap. A hand smacked my face, and it whipped to the side.

"What the f~~k?" Anger replaced the smothering terror as I glared at my assailant.

Ascher's square jaw quivered as he leaned his tousled gold hair and curling black horns down beside Zed. His amber eyes were wide with panic, and he forcefully shook my shoulders back and forth.

"Don't hit her." Jax's scent of warm chestnuts replaced wintry pine as he pulled Ascher away from me.

Disoriented by having so many people yell at me, I tried to focus on calming my erratic breath.

That didn't work, so I concentrated on the handsome face above me. Jax stared down at me with concern in his warm gray eyes.

Maybe it was because he was so much larger than me, or maybe it was the way his lush mouth pulled down into a frown and his eyes radiated sadness.

The big man made me want to break down and sob like a little girl.

For just a moment, I imagined wrapping my arms around him and letting him protect me from the world.

I closed my eyes and slammed my head down against the hard floor. The minor concussion cleared the crazy from my brain.

No one was going to save me.

"What happened, little alpha?" Jax asked softly, as if I was a little girl that might b~t into tears.

He wasn't wrong, but I would be damned if I showed it.

My voice was rough from trying to scream, and I had to cough a couple of times before it worked. The scratchy sound was too loud in the silent room.

"The beta broke into my room, punched me in the f~g nose twice, and told me he was going to r~e me because I was an...outsider. He glared at me all class, so I stole a butcher knife from the carving station at dinner. While he had me pinned and groped me on the floor, I stabbed him with it. Across the face."

I talked quickly, not wanting to get lost in old memories.

The real reason he'd attacked me scalded my brain like a brand.

I might have escaped D~k, but as long as I was a female alpha, I would never be safe in the shifter realm.

Pushing my aching body into a sitting position, I gently ran my finger over my smashed nose. It was practically hanging off my face—cute.

Zed stammered. He spoke fast, like he was afraid the alphas were about to call me a liar and attack. "The door lock has been broken, and the knife is

from the kitchen. His quarters are three floors away. He should never have been here.”

My face throbbed, and I stumbled as I righted myself.

Jax offered me a hand up, but I ignored it.

The alphas were extremely large, and they took up all the space in my small room. My stomach cramped with nausea.

“This never should have happened,” Jax said, and a deep animal rumble filled the space.

It took me a moment to realize the sound was coming from Jax. He was growling, literally, like a wild animal.

My fight-or-flight instincts told me it was time to run for my life.

Tentatively, I edged closer to the door.

“Don’t leave this room!” Ascher yelled, and I jumped.

Naturally, I threw the door open and ran out into the hallway. I wasn’t about to die willingly at the hands of two pissed-off alphas.

I had seen them fight. I didn’t have a chance against two of them.

“You f~~~~g dare,” Cobra whispered into a bloody man’s ear.

In the dark mahogany hallway, Cobra held a body up by its hair.

Candelabras on the ceiling cast dim shadows, and the person in Cobra’s hands was missing half their face. Both their arms and legs had been broken, and they had a mangled beard.

My stomach rolled. I had slit the beta’s face open.

It was my attacker. The alphas must have beaten him afterwards because he barely looked alive.

Keeling over, I vomited the contents of my stomach onto the shiny wooden floor.

Cobra looked over at me but said nothing.

He just held up my attacker by the hair, with bloody knuckles.

My mutilated attacker squinted his dark eyes at me, and for a second, the memory of his hand pawing at my b~t assaulted my senses.

The door to my room slammed open. Jax, Ascher, and Zed joined us in the dark hall.

Thankfully, no one said anything about the pile of vomit in front of me.

Jax was still growling like a wild animal, and I fixated on Ascher's head. His curled onyx horns appeared larger and straighter than usual, like they'd grown on his head.

That couldn't be a good sign.

"He was going to r~e her. You can't punish her for that." Zed's dark hair stuck out in all directions, and he was wearing his pajamas.

The null shifter looked frazzled and out of his league, standing next to the three alphas. They were each a head taller and had at least a hundred pounds of muscle on him.

"R~e?" Cobra looked at Jax, who nodded.

Abruptly, Cobra grabbed my attacker's head with both hands and snapped it to the side.

There was a gruesome crack as he broke the beta's neck in one move. Cobra dropped the dead body like it was garbage, and with a thud, it hit the ground.

Zed jumped at the violence.

Instinctually, I shifted in front of Zed. If the alphas were going to get violent, I wasn't going to let them hurt my only friend.

"Run." I pushed Zed behind me as my eyes stayed on the three alphas in front of me.

A warm hand pressed lightly into my shoulder, and Zed stepped forward beside me. "I'm not leaving you."

A weird feeling pinched my gut.

No one had stood up for me before, let alone a null shifter against violent alphas.

I stared at my thin protector, and gratitude warmed me. Even though I had just met Zed, it was like I had known him my whole life.

“Don’t touch her,” Ascher alpha-barked at Zed, who jumped again in terror.

An alpha’s bark held persuasion, and Zed immediately dropped his hand from my shoulder.

“Don’t yell at him!” I shouted.

Ascher scoffed down at me but didn’t say another word.

I fantasized about stabbing him with his own horn.

“Calm down now. Everyone, stand down.” Jax acted like he was unaffected, but his chest still rumbled. He stared down at the beta’s corpse like he wanted to murder it all over again and said, “He never should have attacked you tonight. This was our fault.”

His braids hung loose around his massive biceps, and some of the long gold chains dangled down to his w~~t. They tinkled as he ran his hand through his braids with frustration.

“Are you okay?” Jax stepped toward me like he was going to hold me. An arm’s length away, he stopped and stared down at me.

Glancing up at his handsome face, I nodded automatically.

Warmth burned my cheeks because I had just zoned out while admiring his gold jewelry.

I must have hit my head harder than I’d realized.

“I’m fine.” I was a good liar.

Technically, I was suffering from PTSD from D~~k. I was the first female alpha in a shifter realm, and a beta had just threatened to r~~e me.

I was as far from fine as a person could get.

“I’ll just be getting back to bed. Thanks for taking care of…” I trailed off and pointed at the dead beta on the ground.

“Night, Zed,” I said, and headed for my bed. However, instead of going through my bedroom door, I walked into a brick wall of frosty air and cool muscle.

Cobra stared down at me and blocked the entrance to my room.

“You gonna beat me up?” I bared my teeth at him.

I had watched Cobra fight during training.

He was a merciless beast.

The biting scent of cold frost became thicker, and my nose burned in Cobra’s proximity.

Inches from his chest, I could see that small diamonds and emeralds were also embedded in bands of skin around his pale arms. The jewels sparkled so much they seemed to move.

“What Cobra means to say is that you will be sleeping in the alpha quarters. It is clearly not safe for you to be alone,” Jax said softly.

I looked up at Cobra questioningly and cocked my eyebrow. It didn’t feel like that was what he’d meant to say.

Cobra bent forward until his sharp cheekbones and emerald eyes filled my vision. It was unfortunate that someone so mean was so stunning.

“Why did you cut out his tongue?” he asked, and his breath was warm against my ear.

“Because he was spewing shit.” Another bout of nausea churned my stomach, and I swallowed down bile.

Shrugging my shoulders with feigned nonchalance, I spun on my heels and smiled up at Jax. “Lead the way to my new room.”

Ascher stalked away down the hallway.

I couldn't tell if he was mad at Jax for inviting me to live with them or mad at me for getting attacked and putting Jax in the position. Either way, he was a drama queen.

"Actually, wait. Do you need me to help pack up my room?" I turned to Zed questioningly.

"No, please go get sleep. I'll have everything arranged." Zed nodded and smiled at me with relief. It was obvious the null shifter was glad I wasn't going back into my room.

"Let's go, roomie," I said with a grimace, to Jax. He offered his massive forearm like I was an omega debutante and not splattered in a dead beta's blood.

Tentatively, I placed my hand around his forearm. He was so large that it was near my head.

"Do you need to see a doctor?" Jax asked.

"No." My broken voice echoed too loudly in the quiet hall.

Cobra shouldered past me roughly but bent down to whisper in my ear, "I don't beat up weaklings."

Goosebumps broke out all over my skin.

It took me a long second to process what Cobra had said, and then the implication hit me: he was answering my question from before.

My core clenched, and I swallowed thickly.

For some damn reason, Cobra whispering about beating me up was making my breath short and my palms sweaty.

Clearly, mental health was still not my strength.

"We'll keep you safe." A soft growl vibrated in Jax's chest comfortingly.

I kept my arm tucked in his as Cobra stalked away from us.

I decided to not point out that Ascher and Cobra were more likely to attack me than they were to protect me.

The image of Cobra snapping the beta's neck flashed before my eyes. Maybe they will protect me?

I sighed heavily. The only person I could trust was myself. And I needed to remember that.

Jax led me through the door with a wooden A for "alpha" on it. I barely registered anything as I sleepily walked over to my new bed and collapsed onto it.