

Silent Mate 61

Chapter 61 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Winter POV

I'm not going to lie, I'm in complete shock over what's happened and being able to finally talk is a miracle in itself. According to Dr. James, I would have healed eventually but Kai choosing to mark me sped up the process. I got angry, I'll admit, but it all worked out in the end. Besides, now I can tell Kai how I really feel and I claimed him, the same way he claimed me. No more trying to protect me out of jealousy, no more just taking things lying down. Now I can really begin to stand up for myself. There's going to be a new Winter, I decided. No more trying to please everyone else, or keeping quiet about what I want. That old Winter is gone. I'm going to be changing things for the better.

Kai leads me out of the hospital room, still feeling guilty, and I tug on his hand and force him to look at me once we safely reach the grounds outside. I can't deal with him looking like that. It's frustrating me.

"Kai" I rasp out, "stop, look at me." God, please look at me for heaven's sake.

He does, but he avoids my eyes and it's irritating the hell out of me. Is he going to wallow in his guilt forever? He needs to get the hell over it. I've already forgiven the idiot. Even if he doesn't really deserve it.

"I forgive you," I said hoarsely and he sighed, looking at me and running a hand through his hair. He looks frustrated with me.

"Has it ever occurred to you, that sometimes you're a little too forgiving? A little too kind" he complains, "wouldn't it be much better to torture me for a little by hating me and, well, yelling at me when you're able to," he finishes dramatically.

I give a raspy giggle. Somehow I can't picture myself yelling at the big bad Alpha, like a harpy. It gives a funny image though.

"No" I whispered, "I want a clean slate. You're taking me out on a date", I tell him, poking his chest with my finger, a look of determination on my face. This was the least he could do. Take me out somewhere nice. Let us finally start the transition forward and let go of everything horrible that happened in the past. Let us forge our future together.

OOoohhh a date. What an awesome, good idea Winter. Make him take us somewhere nice.

He still has to agree to it, Sabriel.

He'll agree, because otherwise, I'm going to bite him, in a not-so-pleasant place that will make him limp for the next few days right between his legs. It will be my pleasure to do it as well.

That's sadistic, Sabriel, and very unkind of you.

I have other ideas I could do instead if that helps. But they all involve pain of some description and even removing his manhood.

No, no, no Sabriel, no more. Let's just let him speak.

Fine, but I want to go somewhere where there's a steak! I want to dance and I want to get laid!

I'll let him know about the steak. But that's a hell no to getting laid. We have already talked about this.

Prude

Hornbag

"A date" murmurs Kai, looking thoughtful "somewhere nice and I can show you I'm trying to change for the better" he mutters, cocking his head. He's clearly trying hard to think of something and my heart is swelling with joy. He's really going to do it, he's actually listening to what I want. I wonder what he's thinking. What kind of place might he have in mind? Whether it will be a relaxed atmosphere or

something else. So many choices. Whatever he does, will give me some more insight into what kind of person he is as well.

"I have a great idea," he says, "but you're going to need time to be ready, and" he takes a deep breath "I want a few days to prepare. That way, your voice might improve to the point we can have full-on conversations without you struggling or without it hurting you to speak."

I contemplate that. It sounds fair, doesn't it? A few days is nothing, I decided. Besides, now I'm intrigued as to what he is planning on. It gives me something to look forward to. Maybe I can guess where he's taking me? Ooooh, it's all so fun. I want to squeal but don't. It might hurt my voice.

"Agreed" I rasp out, and he looked pleased, not to mention excited at the prospect of the date. Is this something he'd been wanting as well? Men were such obtuse creatures. He could have asked me before, for heaven's sake.

"Fantastic," he says with a wicked grin and a wink. I giggled again and let him start tugging me toward the pack house.

It's a beautiful day and I breathe in the fresh air with a smile. There are big fluffy white clouds overhead and a gentle breeze that makes the leaves on the trees and the branches sway back and forth. The sky is so blue, so bright, it lifts my spirits up instantly. The sun is warm as it shines down on me and I can hear the sounds of birds chirping in the distance. It's perfect. I almost want to skip how happy I'm feeling. My heart is singing for joy. I close my eyes and let the breeze flow through my hair. Kai looks surprised at my happiness even though he's the one to put it there.

Instead, I let go of Kai's hand and he stared at me perplexed. I give him a grin of my own and, without ceremony, begin to strip off my clothes nonchalantly. I've been wanting to do this for a long time, it's been far too long since I last went on a run with Sabriel, and today is a good day for it. The weather is beckoning me to go running.

We're going for a run Sabriel

Oh my god, yes, girl. I need to be free, to race through the trees, feel the wind in my glorious fur. Chase down wild animals and scare the crap out of them.

I wonder if Kai will join us.

He'd be crazy not to. I want to see that spunky wolf of his. He's handsome and I want to nuzzle him and lick him all over.

Way too much information, Sabriel, way too much.

I won't tell you the rest of it then, prude.

I'm not a prude. I just don't believe in oversharing.

Yeah, you're a prude. You need some girlfriends to gossip with, even if it's just for my benefit. I need some good gossip to listen to and girly talk. Think about it.

I'll try and make some friends for you then.

For yourself too, no need to be such a loner Winter. Bet there are heaps of friends we can gather. Heck, I'll frigging talk to their wolves if I have to. But you'll always be my best friend, Winter.

You're my best friend too, Sabriel.

I begin to shift as Kai watches wide-eyed, his jaw dropping open. I'm sure he's seen a naked woman before. In fact, I know he has, so it's kind of annoying to see how shocked he is. I can hear my bones cracking and adjusting until I stand before him in all my glory as a wolf. I frowned at myself. I feel like I'm slightly bigger again and as I examine my paws, lifting one up and then the other, I'm certain that they are larger. I don't feel like a tiny runt, but I'm still not as big as the average wolf. Still, it's nice to be a bit bigger. At this rate, I might grow into a normal-sized wolf.

Sabriel, are we bigger? Or am I just imagining things?

I told you, girl. The more confident you get and the more you grow as an individual, the bigger you'll get. Did you not hear me the first time?

But how big will we get?

That's up to you. Continue to believe in yourself and become the confident woman I know you're capable of becoming and who knows how large we'll grow to be. Maybe we'll even be as big as Kai's wolf. Wouldn't that be a hoot?

I doubt that will happen, but it's nice to imagine it will.

Let's run, girl.

Wait, let's see if Kai wants to join us.

Hell yes, I want to see if he gets naked. Up close and personal

I don't think he'll appreciate us staring at him.

You never know. Besides, isn't it a compliment to look at him?

Just don't do anything embarrassing.

We sit down on our haunches and, regard Kai who looks at me with a large smile on his face. He reaches out a hand and I nuzzle him as he pats my silky fur, his eyes wide and gleaming.

"I take it you want to go for a run?" he asks, laughter in his voice as I give an adamant nod. He shrugs.

"Why not," he mutters, "it's been ages since Storm and I have gone for a run ourselves. The pack can wait" he added and, right in front of my eyes, he too began to take off his clothes. He looks entirely comfortable doing it too.

I swear my eyes nearly bug out of my head. He rips his shirt off and I drool, seeing his taut abdomen with a six-pack. God, he's glorious. Sabriel steadily agrees, waving her tail in my head. Horny mutt that she is. His pants are next and I pant as he throws them to the side. God, at this rate, I might have a heart attack, he's like a male Adonis. Male perfection in human form, there's no one that could compare to him. No one would even come close. Sabriel's fairly purring with satisfaction in my mind, openly ogling him like he's a piece of meat. She really has no shame, but then I'm not much better. I can't seem to force myself to look away and he doesn't seem to expect me to. It's like my eyes have a mind of their own. Maybe I'm becoming a bit of a horn bag myself. Or it's Sabriel's influence.

When he starts to peel off his underwear though, I get a bit skittish and my heart starts thumping. Sabriel is urging me to go closer, but I refuse and look down at the ground, hearing Kai chuckle in the background. I only look back up when I hear his bones cracking, the sound loud in the otherwise quietness of the outdoors, until a large black wolf stands where he was moments ago.

He's handsome. His fur is dark as night, his paws large on the ground. He easily towers over my wolf, but Sabriel's not intimidated, instead, she's in awe at his largeness. His eyes are black but stand out against his fur and his claws are silver and gleaming in the sunlight. It's intimidating, to me at least, while Sabriel prances in the background of my mind, impatient to go for a run. We walk closer and nuzzle our head against his fur, Storm doing the same to us. God, his fur is so silky and smooth. Sabriel purrs.

Kai mind-links me to lead the way. Winter, you choose where we go

Hope you can keep up then.

Oh, I'm sure I'll have no problems with that sweetheart, but if it helps, Storm loves the backside on you and is more than happy to watch it as we run.

God, sounds like he's just as much of a horny mutt as Sabriel is.

Kai POV

When Winter strips naked in front of me, I'm taken aback at how nonchalant she is. There's no self-consciousness at all in her movements and the sight of her beautiful body has my cock twitching in my pants and Storm going absolutely crazy in my mind. I can't stop myself from staring at her, knowing I should look away, but my body refuses to cooperate, my eyes widening. I can see the scars on her body

and I so badly want to touch them, and trace them with my fingers, but I don't want to frighten her or cause her to shy away from me either. Those scars are part of her, and if anything, they show just how brave she is.

She shifts and I'm blown away again by her beautiful wolf as she sits on her haunches. I blink in disbelief as I stare. It might be my imagination, but I swear her wolf has grown by several inches. It looks bigger to me at any rate, but then I could be wrong. Clearly, Winter wants to go for a run and I can tell she's waiting for me, her little tail wagging. It's adorable. Well, if she wants to go for a run with me, who am I to stop her? In fact, right now I can't think of anything better I would like to do. Storm is more than game to go for a run, he's practically dancing in my mind with excitement.

Hell yes, it's been so long man. Look how cute our mate is. She's tiny, like so small but sooo cute.

I don't think you should tell her that though Storm, she might take it the wrong way.

Can I tell her she's beautiful? That nothing can compare to her beauty?

Yes, I suppose you could. Women like that sort of thing, so I imagine a female wolf would love it too.

Ah, sweet. You know you should take a leaf out of my book.

Steady boy. You sound lovesick.

That's because I am Kai, that's because I am.

Storm, you have so much self-confidence, it's astounding.

I begin to peel off my clothes and smirk, realizing she's not looking away from me either. I'm not self-conscious, in fact, I take it as a compliment that she can't stop staring at me. I hope she likes what she sees. Storm is raring to go for a run with our mate and I'm hard-pressed to keep him from taking over as we shift to our large black wolf form, easily towering over poor Winter. She's not afraid though, coming over and nuzzling us to Storm's ecstasy. He's really pushing hard and reluctantly I mind-link Winter, for

the first time, since I marked her. It's relatively easy, and to my surprise, there's no resistance at all from her, even though this is the first time we have mind-linked each other.

Winter, Storm really wants to take over and run with your wolf if that's possible. I understand if you say no though. It's entirely your decision and how comfortable you are with it.

That's okay, Sabriel really wants to run with Storm. I had to warn her about no funny business though. You might want to say the same to Storm. I'd rather not have sex in wolf form, no matter how horny Sabriel is. That's not a joke, by the way.

Hear that Storm? No funny business or I will take back control.

Fine, but if she jumps me, I'm not saying no. He grumbles and I sigh. Storm is going to lose control if he so much as attempts to do the naughty without Winter's consent. I suspect the same goes for Sabriel.

I give Storm control and Winter does the same with Sabriel. It's always a surreal feeling being in the back of my mind like a passenger in a car seat, but it's cool at the same time. Sabriel takes off at a run and Storm trots to keep up with her. Because Sabriel's still quite small, Storm doesn't have to fully run to stay in stride with her, but he doesn't care, he's fully enjoying himself. I watch as my big bad Alpha wolf, turns to putty in Sabriel's hands, nuzzling her constantly and licking her neck. Sigh, I'm almost embarrassed at my wolf's public display of affection. Not that Storm cares. He just smirks at me.

They run together, through the trees which pass by in a blur. For fun, they track down a nearby buck and scare it, rather than eat it. According to Sabriel, Storm tells me, Winter would rather not eat anything raw. I agree. I've never liked eating animals in wolf form, but when hunting and traveling it was a necessity and I understand that. Storm's a little disgruntled. He loves to eat animals but he respects Winter's wishes, knowing that she might take control otherwise of her wolf and he would lose his time with Sabriel.

The hours pass by as they frolic together, play fighting, and enjoying the outdoors, but even wolves get tired eventually, it must be said. Storm is sad to stop and so is Sabriel, but Winter and I are starving now, as well as tired ourselves. We need food to replenish our strength and soon. Not to mention fluids.

We make it back to our clothes and I shift first, Winter seconds later. I finished dressing and turned around to see that Winter's cheeks were bright red. Is she blushing? I gave a slow grin. She must have

been checking me out while I dressed. Not that she'd admit it. But still, I feel a sense of satisfaction. I should have dressed more slowly and teased her.

"Hungry?" I asked teasingly, holding out my arm and feeling a glow inside as she took it, nodding her cute little head firmly.

"Yes," she rasps, laughter in her voice. She seems to have enjoyed herself.

We made it to the kitchen and I made her sit down, noticing that, except for the flush in her cheeks, she looked extremely pale.

"How do omelets sound with some chicken?" I asked and she looked at me in surprise.

"You cook?" she says incredulously.

I pretended to be offended. "Of course, I cook. Not all of us men are hopeless in the kitchen", I tell her gruffly.

"Sounds good" she gets out and I grin, whipping up the ingredients in no time. I do make a mean omelet if I do say so myself. Although contrary to what I told Winter, it's one of the few things I'm competent at. I'm not so good with complex recipes, but she doesn't need to know that. This will impress her and that's what I'm after.

I slide the plate in front of her, sitting across from her and watching with delight as she picks up the fork and takes her first mouthful, moaning in delight. Fuck, my dick twitches at the sound and I squirm in my seat, hurriedly beginning to eat in the hopes of distracting myself. It doesn't work and I continue to shift, trying my best to stop myself from hardening.

There's silence as we eat, but it's not the awkward type of silence. Rather, it's a comfortable silence and before long, I push my plate away, Winter's still half full and she glances at me sheepishly. I guess I gave her too much to eat.

"I thought you were hungry" I commented, a little nonplussed and slightly panicked. What if she didn't like it and was just being polite? Maybe I could offer to make her something else? A sandwich, or crackers or something?

"I'm not used to eating large portions", she admits dryly, and my heart stops.

Of course, she's not, not with all the abuse she told me about. I decided not to make a big deal about it, not wanting to make her uncomfortable. Still, the mood is slightly awkward now.

I grab the plates and place them gingerly in the sink, returning with two sodas, one of which I hand to her as she looks at me gratefully and begins to sip. There's an idea playing around in my mind and I don't know whether it's a great idea or not. Still, I can't stop myself from mentioning it.

"I know you want to go on a date," I said delicately as she nodded, "and I very much want that too, but there's something else I want to ask you about while I have your full attention. It's important to me and I want to get your opinion."

She waits patiently, hands on the table as I ponder what to say. Stuff it, I'm just going to tell her.

"There's an annual meeting every year with us Alphas. We take our partner to the summit and there's dancing, talking, just a casual sort of thing. Would you mind attending with me? I can show you off to the other Alphas" I said, feeling a bit hopeful that she might agree to it.

She looks pensive, sipping at her soda, while I wait on tenterhooks. Is she going to agree or have I moved way too fast for her liking?

Finally, she gives a broad smile. "I would like that," she says hoarsely as I reach over and grip her hand, a smile on my face.

"When is it?" she asks.

I stop and think. Shit. It's actually not that far away. Hopefully, that won't matter. I met her eyes feeling sheepish. "It's in two weeks' time," I said slowly, "which means we need to organize a dress for you before you go."

Winter looks at me and shakes her head. My heart plummets to the ground. Did she not want to go with me now? Was it too soon for her liking?

"No dress," she tells me and my heart begins to speed up again "I don't like them."

It's unusual, but if she doesn't want to wear a dress, I'm not going to make her. But I can't help myself from asking "what would you like to wear?"

She shrugs. "A skirt maybe, not sure."

Fair enough. Why shouldn't she be comfortable in her own skin and clothes? I guess we men have it easy in that respect. It's easier for us to get dressed and go. I want her to dress however she likes, even if it means a sweatshirt and pants. She looks beautiful no matter what she wears.

"In the meantime, I'll get started on this date of ours," I said with a wicked wink as she giggled and asked, "are you going to be okay if I go and do some business?" I asked. "You could always sit in the study with me" I added, my eyes lighting up.

"Can I come with you?" she asks uncertainly.

"Oh, you bet you can" I growled, picking her up and carrying her down the hallway. I place her on the couch in the corner as she watches, sitting on my computer and doing the bare minimum I need to do for today.

I'm still contemplating date night when I finally close the laptop and glance over at the couch. Winter's asleep, tossing and turning slightly as I walk over. Do I wake her? Or let her sleep? She looks so innocent and childlike, I can't help but reach over and touch her face, her pale lips partially open and her soft snores filling the room. It's so endearing.

Quietly, I gathered her up and began the long trek upstairs, careful not to wake her. Date night was going to be the best damn date Winter had ever been on, I determined, looking down at my beautiful mate. It was time I started making everything up to her and showed her just what a great mate I could be and show her my adoration at the same time. Make up for all the crappy things I've done to her.

Chapter 62 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Winter POV

Kai's been a little on edge the last two days and I'm wondering about that, but he's also been secretive and avoiding me, which I'm hoping is for a very good reason. I walk out of the bathroom, thoughts whirling around in my head and stop short. There, lying spread out on the bed, is an outfit, one that astonishes me as I walk over and pick up the skirt and shirt, a smile on my face. He had to have chosen this out himself and that pleases me more than anything. Is this for our date? Are we finally going on one? I've been waiting with anticipation for it.

He's listened to me when it comes to dresses, then I think relieved. The skirt is gorgeous, a black leather one that flows out from the hips and stops just above the knees. There's a plain white camisole to go with it but the jacket he's provided stops me in my tracks. It's leather, the same black as the skirt, but short, ending at my hips. It's one of the most beautiful jackets I've ever seen and I admire it greatly, holding it up against my body, even twirling around in front of the mirror. It's so beautiful, but more importantly, I feel beautiful imagining myself in it. I can't wait to try these clothes on, I think awed.

There's a piece of paper on the floor and I scoop it up, knowing it must be from Kai. It must be a message of some sort.

It simply reads "Date night tonight, get dressed and wait for me to come to get you."

Short but sweet, I think, eagerly getting dressed and admiring myself in the mirror. Since I arrived at Kai's pack, I've gained some weight and filled out my curves. My skin has started to tan, a golden honey color that brings color to my face. As I stare at my reflection in the mirror, I see a pretty girl instead of the one I used to know. It's so astonishing how much I've changed, but it's been for the better. I'm growing as a person and becoming more like who I want to be, instead of the old Winter who was beaten and tortured. I never want to be the old Winter, ever again.

You look smashing Winter. My god, that man has good taste in clothes, hasn't he?

Isn't it beautiful Sabriel? I wonder what he has in mind for tonight? I wonder where we are going?

Something tells me it's going to involve dancing, or at least I hope so. We can get our jiggy on, and dance with him. Have loads of fun.

You're weird, but I love you anyway, Sabriel.

Love you too, Winter, but in a different way to Kai. I love him too.

I think I might love him as well Sabriel. I think I do.

The door slowly creaks open and I whirl around, my eyes meeting Kai's as he steps into the bedroom, a smile on his handsome face, and a bouquet of flowers in his hands. He holds them out to me as I gasp and I eagerly accept them, sniffing their fragrances while my heart thuds loudly in my chest. He's taken the trouble to bring me flowers. I'm already melting and we haven't even made it out of the bedroom yet. Sabriel is purring in my mind. She adores the flowers as well. Purple roses are one of my favorite flowers. How had he known? I think I only mentioned it once and it was in passing.

I couldn't help staring at Kai. He's made a special effort to dress himself in a suit today, black trousers, and a white shirt with a suit jacket, but it makes him look even more masculine and handsome. His scars stand out, but truth be told, I barely even notice them anymore. I hope he doesn't get self-conscious while we are out. I want him to feel comfortable and have a good time as well. God, he's so damn gorgeous and it's like he doesn't even know it.

He gives me a smile. "You look beautiful," he tells me huskily as I glow at the compliment.

"Thank you for the outfit and the flowers," I said quietly. My voice has slowly gotten better over the last few days and, although it's still quite hoarse, I can speak a lot easier. It doesn't hurt as much either.

"You're welcome. Are you ready to leave?" he asks and I look at him, wriggling my eyebrows and making him laugh.

"Maybe, do you want to tell me where we are going?" I asked and he shook his head slowly, a small smile on his face.

"It's a surprise," he says firmly, taking hold of my hand, and I reluctantly place the flowers on the bed, on the way out of the bedroom. Hopefully, they don't die while we are gone.

He leads me down to the garage and opens the door to the nearby Mercedes, helping me inside like a true gentleman. I'm speechless. This is a side of Kai I've never seen before, but man do I really like it. He shuts the door and makes his way over to the driver's side, getting in smoothly and turning the engine on.

"Do you want some music?" he asks and I nod, watching as he turns the stereo on before he begins to pull out. It's country music and I grin. Nothing beats a good old country song when it comes to driving.

I lean back against the chair and relax, enjoying the peaceful drive and the scenery as we go past. But soon enough, we're pulling into the city and I give Kai a questioning look. I'm not used to the nightlife but he takes hold of my hand and squeezes it.

"I know you just turned eighteen a few months ago," he tells me quietly as I nod, surprised he remembers "and it occurred to me there's a lot of things you've not had the opportunity to do yet. So I thought we would go to a club I know, it's the best in the city", he boasts and I laugh, feeling incredibly nervous. I've never been clubbing but I know plenty of people in school have. It just seemed to be so crowded.

I felt a slight sense of panic. I don't know how to dance. What if I embarrass him? Or what if other women try to take him away from me? Sabriel gets annoyed at that thought and I hastily cool her down. He seems to be reading my thoughts.

"For what it's worth," he says quietly, still driving, face gathered in concentration "I am not much of a dancer either. We can look awkward together" he chuckles.

That makes me giggle. This could be fun. In fact, the more I think about it, the happier I become. I might not be of the legal age to drink, but that doesn't mean I can't have a good time and I hadn't expected Kai

to think of something like this for our first date. He was really putting in the effort. Especially since I can't see him actually liking big crowds like this.

He pulls into a carpark as I stare at the building in awe. It has large neon lights pronouncing the name "Club 666" and there's a huge line of people waiting to get through the door. It's going to take forever before we can get inside, I think to myself, a little deflated. Kai opens the door and takes my hand.

"Let's go have some fun," he says and I smile, taking his arm and letting him shut the door. Oh well, it will be worth the wait.

I fully expect us to both go join the back of the line but instead, Kai makes a beeline towards the bouncer, a small smile on his face, even as I'm hesitant. What is he doing? We can't just jump the line like that? Already the crowd is muttering and I can hear angry voices which make me cringe, even as Kai drags me to the front of the line where the bouncer is waiting.

"Leo," he says, startling me as he greets the bouncer. The bouncer is a large man, clearly, a shifter with muscled arms folded across his bulky chest, his head shaved, and sunglasses on his eyes. He's not fooling around when it comes to security. He looks like he takes his job very seriously.

"Alpha Kai", the bouncer greets him with a smile as I look back and forth between them. They seem to know each other, but I hadn't thought that Kai would be the regular clubbing type, so what was going on? Were they old friends from school or something?

"This is my date Winter". Kai introduces me and the bouncer shakes my hand, gently for someone with such large hands. He seems to be a nice person, even if he does look a bit scary.

"It's a pleasure to meet you, Winter," Leo says.

"Nice to meet you" I stammered back, looking helplessly at Kai.

He takes pity on me. "Leo, is it cool if we go inside now? I want to get Winter out of the cold. It's freezing out here."

Leo gives him a wink. "Course you can," he says with a chuckle and a shake of his head. "I'm not about to tell the owner he can't get into his own club. I don't have a death wish" he jokes, undoing the rope and allowing Kai to drag me inside. Well, not drag, maybe gently tug me inside.

I'm in shock. I can't believe that Kai owns a club. It's freaking cool. As we step inside the interior of the building, my eyes widen and my jaw drops open. It's beautiful. It has a sense of luxury, with booths all around the dance floor and tables, and waitresses serving guests quickly. The dance floor is bright and the music is loud, people dancing everywhere, their hands on each other, several others making out. The atmosphere is bouncing and it's clear this is a popular club. It's totally wild and utterly cool. It's also making me feel completely out of my depth.

"I can't believe you own this," I say slowly and he grins and gives me a wink.

"There are lots of things you don't know about me," Kai says as he steers me towards a table and sits me down. "Trust me, I'm an enigma", he jokes and I giggle. He certainly is. But one that I was slowly getting to know.

I looked around wide-eyed, trying to take it all in. I've never been clubbing before and this is so exciting. My foot is tapping to the music as a waitress approaches. I frown when she bends over to speak to Kai, showing off her impressive cleavage and deliberately ignoring me. I feel snubbed. I also feel incredibly angry while I struggle to keep my cool. Not that the bitch notices or anything.

"What can I get you to drink" she coos, flipping her blonde hair over her shoulder and batting her eyelashes at him. My hands clench into fists under the table.

Sabriel is ready to lunge across the table and send the waitress flying. Kai, to his credit, doesn't even look at the waitress but instead turns to me.

"What would you like to drink?" he asks politely as the waitress begins to look disgruntled, sneering at me.

"I'll have a root beer please," I say, and he nods.

"I'll have a coke," he tells her and she walks off looking annoyed. Take that, I think to myself triumphantly. Kai hadn't even spared her a second glance.

"You're not going to drink?" I asked uncertainly.

He shrugs. "If you can't drink, then neither will I."

Then he sits back against the chair and observes me with those dark eyes of his, narrowing them as a small smile appears on his face.

"Tell me, Winter," he drawls as my heart skips a beat "what would you like to do now?"

Chapter 63 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Kai POV

The club is loud and there are couples gyrating on the dance floor everywhere. I might own the club, but this really isn't my scene, not that I'm about to tell Winter that. Not when she's looking all over the place with awe, a large smile on that beautiful face of hers. She looks like she's glowing in excitement and I'm further surprised when she just orders a root beer to drink and sips at it, her face alight as she listens to the music, her foot tapping in time to the rhythm. She looks like any other normal teenage girl out clubbing.

For a while we sip our drinks, content to listen and be quiet, occasionally asking each other questions, but I can see Winter longingly looking at the dance floor. The outfit I chose for her suits her down to the ground and she even added leggings to it. She looks stunning, an absolute goddess, and easily the most beautiful woman in the room. I'm lucky to have her here with me, that's for sure. Especially given the envious looks of several other males who spot her. I smirk. She's all mine, fellas. Come near her and I'll murder you without a qualm.

I quietly place my drink down and turn to her with a small smile. "Would you like to dance" I offer and her eyes light up immediately as she stands up and almost drags me to the dance floor. I guess that's a yes, then.

We went to the edge of the dance floor. I prefer not to be in the center with all the gyrating bodies everywhere. Good lord, some of these girls are wearing almost nothing. Aren't they freezing?

I'm a little out of my element. I'm not much of a dancer and I'm also incredibly aware of my scars. I can see a few women pointing them out to each other and whispering and my face burns in embarrassment. But I was determined to make sure that Winter had a good time and that's what I was going to do. So I put aside all my inhibitions and began to groove to the music, Winter laughing at my pathetic attempt to dance to a young person's music as I like to think of it. But at least she's having fun and that's what matters the most to me. I want her to be out here enjoying herself.

She's having a wonderful time, even cozying up to me and laughing as I twirl her around. But it's not long until I get hot from all the moving around in the crowd and, judging by the flush on her cheeks, she feels the same. We both need to cool down.

"Another drink?" I suggest and she nods gratefully, using her hand to fan her face as I lead her back toward one of the booths.

"Root beer?" I check and she gives a small nod. "I'll be right back," I tell her with a smile. I go and join the crowd waiting to be served.

We could wait for a waitress but it's gotten crowded now and they appear to be run off their feet. It will be much quicker to go to the bar and fetch them. I make a mental note to hire more waitresses as I make my way over and give the bartender a small smile.

"Root beer and coke please," I tell him and he nods, serving the drinks up quickly. The bartender is efficient. I'll give him that. Doesn't try to engage in small talk, as a lot of them do. He's also not trying to hit on any of the women which I like. This means he takes his job seriously.

He places the drinks in front of me and I take one in each hand, slowly maneuvering my way through the crowd to make it back to Winter. I frown. There's a guy standing in front of Winter, looking down at her, swaying slightly on his feet. He's clearly inebriated. I hesitate. Storm wants to go over there and slam the guy's face into the table, but part of me is hesitant. I don't want to play the hero if she's capable of sending him away herself. Besides, she might not welcome my interference. I slowly walked towards the table, able to catch some of the conversations with my sensitive hearing.

"How are you doing, baby doll" creep a Zoids voice. He's definitely drunk and slurring his words. Asshole.

"I'm not your babydoll". Winter's voice, she sounds extremely annoyed and angry, staring up at the man who's towering over her.

"You don't have to be like that" creeps voice. Determined fucker, I'll give him that.

"I'm here with someone so I'd appreciate it if you would leave." Winter's voice. She's standing up for herself. Good for her.

I glow at that. Still, I move closer in case she needs me. My whole body is tense. I'm prepared to step in at any moment and deal with this creep the way he deserves to be treated.

"You mean that man with those ugly scars", the creep's voice sneers, and I see Winter stiffen. She looks pissed off. Somehow, I'm not surprised that my scars get dragged into this, but Winter's reaction surprises me the most.

"They are not ugly", Winter's voice. "Please leave." She's starting to sound a bit angry now and I wonder whether I should stop this guy now or wait. Then I see red. The creep has taken hold of her arm and she's trying to pull it back to no avail. He's too strong for her and it shows. Bastard. I hate men who manhandle women. He's mine now, the fuckers going down. I began to move. Something's wrong. He has something in his pocket that's gleaming in the light. How the hell did he get past security? Son of a bitch.

"Listen you little bitch. Do as I say or I'll knife you right here and now..." he begins and that's it. I drop the drinks and storm towards them both, my eyes turning pitch black in my anger. How dare he? I think furiously, but then I'm stopped in my tracks. Winter's handling it.

"I asked you more than once to leave me alone," Winter says icily, "and you still continued to bother me.. I'm not going anywhere with you, you son of a bitch" she hisses and pulls her arm free. In one smooth movement, as I watch in disbelief, she reaches over, grasps his head, and slams it on the table as he gives a shocked cry, blood pouring from no doubt what is now a broken nose. I'm speechless and in awe. She freaking slammed his head into the table, and the man more than deserved it. Way to go, Winter!

I see him starting to get back up and come over, gripping hold of the man's arm as security approaches. They should have been a bit quicker, I think to myself, slightly annoyed at them. Did they not see what was happening over here?

"He was pawing the lady, get his ass outta here," I tell them. "Make sure he leaves and never returns. Oh, and he has a knife on him" I growl, watching as they begin to pat him down.

They give a nod and I turn to Winter, who is pale and shaky but still looking absolutely furious. She looks absolutely adorable. I keep that thought to myself though. I don't want to make her even angrier. I just hope she doesn't want to go home yet and call the date over.

"Are you alright?" I asked softly, grabbing hold of her arm, where he'd taken hold, and softly rubbing it as she looked at me, a troubled look on her face.

She gives me a small nod. "He wouldn't leave me alone, I had to do it," she tells me worriedly, biting her lip. "Am I in trouble?"

I laughed, my shoulders shaking in amusement. Why on earth would she be in trouble when all she'd done was defend herself against a creep who was manhandling her? If anything, she'd done the club a favor in getting rid of a predator. She should be proud of herself.

"No, I saw the whole thing" I muttered. "You did well. I'm actually really proud of you Winter for standing up for yourself like that. It was amazing."

"Really?" she says in a small voice "I haven't wrecked the date?" she asks timidly.

Is that what she's worried about? I feel a warm glow inside of me. She hasn't ruined anything. There's no way I would say this date was ruined. Not when it's only just begun. Poor thing.

"Of course not," I said with a grin. "Do you want to leave or do you want to go and dance some more?" I really hope she wants to dance again, I'm desperate to have her in my arms again.

She cocks her head and gives me the tiniest smile. "I would like to dance" she breathes and I lead her to the dance floor, twirling her around and ignoring the mutters and looks. All I can think about is Winter and how she had defended my scars against the creep who'd approached her. She didn't have to but she'd done it anyway, not aware that I could hear. My heart skips a beat. I've fallen in love with this girl, completely and utterly, but I had yet to say the words, at least in an official matter. Would she accept my feelings or would she think I was moving too fast? I decide to wait, closing my eyes and resting my head on hers as we slowly move in time to the music, grateful just to hold her in my arms and breathe in her delicious scent. This has been the best night of my life and it's all because I got to spend it with my mate. I'll never forget this date for as long as I live. I hope it's the same for Winter. But I'll never know unless she tells me. At least I know it's the first date she's ever been on. Surely that would make it special, wouldn't it?

Later, I'm driving and keeping a wary look on my sleepy mate. She stares out the window, watching the scenery, her eyes barely staying open as I force back my grin. There's no way she's going to be awake when we make it back to the pack house. Not that I mind. It means I get to hold her again when I put her to bed. But, I say sternly to my wolf who's prancing around in my head, it would only be putting her to bed, not the other thing. Storm whines but accepts it. The poor girl's almost comatose, that's how tired she is.

"Kai" she mutters, slurring her words from how tired she is, "can we go back again and dance together?"

Of course, we can. We can do whatever her little heart desires if it means I get to hold her in my arms again or kiss her. Man, I'm becoming clingy, aren't I? Yet I can't seem to help myself, not when it comes to her at any rate.

"Anytime you want, so long as there's nothing else going on" I promised thickly. She's already planning on going out with me again. I gave a cheesy grin. The next date will be even better, I promise myself.

She puts her head on her shoulder and her soft snores begin to fill the silence in the car as I smile, carefully driving slowly, wanting to prolong this date for as long as I possibly can. I can't help wanting to be this selfish. It's the most quality time I've ever managed to spend with Winter. That's my fault though, not hers.

Then she utters the words and I almost swerve the car in my shock, in her sleep. "I love you."

Chapter 64 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Winter POV

The summit is unlike anything I've ever seen before. It's unreal, the number of Alpha and Luna's that are present and mingling in such a large crowd together. I felt underdressed in my outfit but at least I was comfortable. Some of the women here are wearing such tight dresses that it's a miracle in itself that they are able to walk, not to mention their shoes! I feel sorry for them. It can't be much fun being barely able to move. Plus, Kai has already told me I'm beautiful, so he doesn't seem to think I'm underdressed.

"Are you alright?" Kai asks me and I try to give him a smile, albeit a bit of a shaky one. This is nothing I'd anticipated ever going to but that didn't mean I wanted to spoil it for him. After all, he was really trying, being the perfect gentleman and I was appreciative of all his efforts. He's trying to make sure I'm comfortable, even with this large crowd.

"I'm alright," I said quietly, the rasp was almost completely gone from my voice now. "just overwhelmed" I admit, after all, it's not a lie, I am extremely overwhelmed and uncomfortable in such a large crowd.

"I'm right here with you sweetheart," he tells me, and I feel his hand on my back as we slowly walk into the room, Kai making a beeline for another man, making sure I'm by his side the entire time.

"Alpha Terrence" he exclaims, and the man turns, one of the few present without a Luna by his side. He lights up the second he sees Kai and it's clear to see that they not only know each other but that they know each other well.

I eyed the man curiously. He's large and well-built, but he's nothing compared to Kai, who seems much bigger and more muscular in comparison. Still, he's a handsome man with dark brown hair and a sheepish-looking smile on his face, his green eyes twinkling as he greets Kai back. He seems nice. I like the look of him.

"Terrence, this is Winter, my mate", Kai tells him with a smile, pushing me slightly forward as I shoot daggers at him. I'm feeling shy.

"It's a pleasure to meet you, Alpha Terrence", I manage to croak out, and the other Alpha smiles and shakes my hand eagerly.

"I never thought I'd see the day you actually accepted a mate, you old dog" laughed Terrence. "I approve though, Winter, you're a very beautiful woman", he compliments me and I nearly glow at his compliments, while Kai looks slightly disgruntled. Ha, serves him right for putting me on the spot like that.

"How do you two know each other?" I asked in curiosity.

"Terrence went to school with me", Kai explains, "we were friends and have tried to keep up with each other since. We don't catch up as much as we'd both like to though. Being Alpha of our packs, keeps us both busy regretfully."

This was news to me, but welcome. At least I now know that Kai does have friends and isn't as much the loner as I initially thought he was. Plus, this friend was lovely and definitely not female, which made me feel even better. For some reason, I had thought there would be loads of women hitting on him, and even now I'm keeping a wary eye out. God, I'm a jealous little thing, I thought to myself, cool it down Winter, Kai's marked you remember? But I can't help comparing myself to some of the women here and finding myself lacking in some way. I really need to work on my confidence, Sabriel's already scolding me inside my head. I need to be more like her, I think, with a chuckle. Nothing gets Sabriel down. She's got killer confidence in spades.

Then the music starts and Terrence gives me a glance while Kai stiffens. I know my mate's not much of a dancer, but I'm itching to dance to the slow music. It's easy to dance to.

"May I have this dance?" Terrence asks me and Kai gives me a small nod, letting me know it's okay.

"I would love to" I answered and he swept me onto the dance floor, holding me close, his hand on my waist and the other one holding my hand. We begin to sway to the music.

"He looks different" Terrance comments as we move around the dance floor, a gleam in his eyes. He sounds pleased.

I frowned, perplexed. What did he mean by that?

"He seems to be smiling more, more relaxed" he clarifies, "at school he was always so angry, so mad, and when that girl rejected him" he trailed off and I didn't need him to finish the sentence to know that's when Kai changed for good, believing he was unworthy of being loved. I felt a pang for the boy I never got to know. But at least I get to know the man, I remind myself.

"You've made him into a happier man, Winter, you're a miracle worker," he tells me with a smile, but I'm in disbelief. Had I really managed to change Kai that much, that even his friends could see the difference? Because to me, he was just his normal self. I must have blinkers on.

Kai pats Terrence on the shoulder as he gives me a wink.

"May I cut in?" Kai asks, but his tone brooks no arguments, and Terrence chortles as he reluctantly lets go of me.

"You may," Terrence says, resigned, "but only because you'll rip my head off if I say no."

I giggle as Kai grins and takes hold of my hand, swaying back and forth to the music. Just being in my mate's embrace made me feel so loved and cherished, although it was hard to ignore the pointing and muttering amongst the crowds, especially from the women. I can tell Kai is getting self-conscious and rise to my tiptoes and give him a peck on the cheek.

"They're just jealous I'm with the most handsome man in the room tonight" I declared hotly and his eyes sparkle down at me with good humor.

"You are, are you" he growls and I nod my head emphatically, my eyes smiling up into his. He twirls me around as I give a small shriek. He laughs and I adore the sound of it. He's having such a great time, and if I'm honest with myself, I am too.

The music stops and I look over at the refreshments. "How about I fetch us some drinks" Kai offers, pointing to a table, where I'm relieved to see Terrence is sitting and chatting with another person. "That's our table," he tells me and I nod, slowly walking towards it while Kai heads in the opposite direction. Terrence is giving me a welcoming smile. I grin. Looks like I get to know Kai's friend a little better.

Someone stumbles into me and almost causes me to fall as I turn around in annoyance. A well-built man, dressed in a suit and with his hair slicked back like some sort of mafia man, glares down at me before his expression changes to one that instantly chills my blood and causes me to stiffen. I've seen that look before and I hate it.

"Well, aren't you a pretty little thing" he drawls, and I feel the bile rise up my throat as I smell the scent of alcohol on his breath. His words are slurred and he's weaving slightly. Great, the last thing I need is a drunken Alpha to contend with. What is it with these asshole men thinking they're gods gifts to us women? Why can't they just get a goddamn clue? Besides, can't he tell I'm here with someone? Wanker.

"Let's go back to my room and have some fun" he slurs, and I shake my head, even as his eyes turn pitch black.

"No, thank you," I said firmly and turned back around to go to the table when his hand gripped hold of my shoulder so hard that tears came to my eyes. Can he not see that I'm marked and claimed? Or is he so arrogant that he doesn't care? The crowd is watching closely now and I can see two men coming towards me, presumably to help me, but I'm not waiting around. I'm sick of people thinking they can have whatever they want by using force. I don't care that he's an Alpha or that he has authority. In fact, I'm so angry that my whole body is shaking now as I turn and face him again. I'm ready to rip his head off with my bare hands.

"Let go of me," I said between gritted teeth, and his smile grew wider. God, he really is an idiot.

"Come with me" he repeats, and that's it. I raise my hand and slap him across the face, the sound loud and sickening as the crowd falls silent. Even the Alpha looks shocked for a moment as he finally lets go and clutches his cheek. I guess he's not used to being refused, something else that makes me feel sick to my stomach.

"You little bitch" he hissed, dropping his hand and advancing. I stare right at him, not intimidated at all, not even when he raises his own hand to strike me, the other two men trying to get to me frantically before he can strike me.

"She told you to let go" a voice growls from behind me and my heart skips a beat. He came to my side and the Alpha let his hand fall down.

"Bitch slapped me," the Alpha said loudly, looking around the room. "we all know that means she has to be punished."

I open my mouth to protest, and Terrence comes up beside Kai.

"You tried to force someone who's mated to go to your room, if anything, you're the one that's going to be punished," Terrence said thickly, on the other side of me. "That slap was well deserved" another man chimed in and the crowd began to agree. Thank god they seem to be on my side. Not that Kai would ever let something happen to me.

The two men from before gripped hold of the man's arms and dragged him away, cursing and kicking, furious that he was being thrown out of the summit. I watch him go and give him the finger just for added emphasis as Terrence chokes behind me and Kai slaps me on the back in pride.

"That's my girl" he declares approvingly as the crowd begins to talk and chatter amongst themselves. "So strong and so brave" he compliments me as I blush.

"That's one hell of a girl you have there, Kai. Make sure you don't lose her", Terrance says, sounding envious as he walks back to the table.

Kai leans down and gives me a kiss that has my body trembling and feeling like complete putty in his hands. "Don't I know it" he murmurs in my ears, "I have the woman of my dreams" he declares, taking hold of my hand and tugging me towards the table "and damned if I let anything else happen to her tonight. Not when there's still plenty of fun to be had", he tells me with a wink, and I relax, grateful that he doesn't want to leave just yet. I still want to dance and there are plenty of people to meet. Not only that, but both of us are staying in a hotel room and I wasn't quite sure where the night might lead to. But I knew that there was a decision I was going to have to make and it was going to involve complete trust in Kai. The question was, would Kai show me that trust or would I be disappointed in him and myself again?

Chapter 65 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Kai POV

The summit seems to be going really well and I'm careful to keep Winter by my side as long as I can. Except for that one incident involving that drunken bastard of an Alpha trying to force Winter to go with him, the night has run quite smoothly and Winter in particular seems to be having a wonderful time. I'm glad about that at least. I would have hated it if she was miserable being here, because that was not my intention at all, bringing her here.

She seems to be really fitting in, doesn't she, Kai? She doesn't look out of place at all.

I guess so Storm.

Did you ever think that you would fall so hard for your real mate? I told you, all you had to do was give her a chance.

Yeah, yeah, yeah, rub it in, why don't you?

Well if you hadn't been so bloody stubborn you jackass.

Storm, you're pushing the friendship line.

Fine, but you should know that there's someone here that you definitely don't want to have to see again. Disgusting piece of trash that she is. I hope she dies of food poisoning or someone kills her for being mouthy. Urgh. I feel the need to take a shower and get clean.

Who on earth are you talking about Storm?

I trail off as the familiar scent of perfume hits me, stiffening as I grab hold of Winter instinctively. Well, that was just fucking great. So much for having a good night. This was more than bound to ruin it. Who in the bloody hell had brought her along to this summit? Unless she had suddenly found her mate, but I highly doubt that. Fuck, fuck, fuck. This was the last thing I needed to deal with right now. All my plans for a wonderful evening are going up in smoke right in front of my eyes. Damn it.

"Alpha Kai" comes her voice, sickeningly sweet, and I close my eyes, take a deep breath and turn with Winter still clutching my hand, a forced smile on my own face. Two can play that game. I can pretend she's not bothering me. How hard can it be?

She looks just the same, clad in a bright red dress, so tight it pulls along her chest and shows off her impressive cleavage, with killer heels to match. She's dressed to the nines and it's a far cry from Winter's own outfit that she'd worn for comfort. She's also clinging onto Alpha Liam's arm hard, her eyes narrowed and calculated as she stares at me and glares hard at Winter. I glared back at her, holding tightly to Winter's hand in a possessive manner that leaves no confusion. Not to mention the mark on Winter's neck that shows she's been claimed by me.

"Hello, Candice," I said between gritted teeth. Now I know why I haven't seen her around the pack lately, she must have left and gone traveling and Langdon wouldn't have cared enough to inform me about it. She looks way too relaxed next to Alpha Liam, whose eyes are hard. I've never liked the man, and the feeling is mutual considering how hard he's glaring at me.

"Hello," Winter says in a subdued tone and I watched Candice gasp, surprised that my mate is now able to speak. Clearly, she hadn't been anticipating that at all. I fight the urge to smirk at her, pulling Winter tighter and tucking her under my shoulder, in a blatant and possessive move that Candice understands, her anger showing in her face. I resisted the urge to flick my finger at her. Winter just looks annoyed.

"Winter" she coos, "how lovely to meet you again."

Winter stiffens next to me and then raises her head and stares challengingly at Candice. "Really," Winter says icily, "because I have to say that it's not really a pleasure to see you again at all," she says with a sugary sweet tone as I blink and almost jump in celebration. So Winter's not going to fake niceties. It's good for her. Candice is taken aback, I can't help noticing with amusement. She wasn't expecting that type of response. Either that or she didn't know that Winter can talk now.

"Quite a mate you've got there" Alpha Liam finally speaks, "is she always this rude?"

I scoff. "Only when it's deserved."

Candice just bites her lip and fumes. I guess she thought I would be brokenhearted or something because now she just looks disappointed. Ha. I hope she leaves now.

Then her eyes begin blazing. "How nice that Winter can look past your ahem" Candice coughs "scars. Don't you ever get self-conscious being with him" she added cruelly, looking over at Winter.

I stiffen. With those words, I'm back to being self-conscious, trying hard not to trace my scars with my fingertips as Candice smirks at me, clearly proud of herself.

"Never," Winter whispers, "his scars prove how courageous and brave he is. I consider it an honor that he is my mate and I would never feel self-conscious being beside him. If that's how you feel, then I feel sorry for whoever ends up as your mate. Beauty doesn't last forever, you know, and it's what's inside that counts. Pity you haven't learned that yet" she tells Candice before turning to me. Alpha Liam's mouth opens in shock as well. She deliberately ignores both of them.

"Kai, would you dance with me?" she asks and I beam, taking hold of her hand and shooting Candice a triumphant glance.

"I would be honored," I told her and walked away without turning around, hearing Candice wail and splutter in the background as I placed my hand around Winter's waist and took her hand, moving slowly back and forth to the music, Winter leaning her head against my chest, sparks flying between us.

"I'm sorry about Candice". I apologize "I didn't know she would be attending."

Winter searches my eyes for the truth and then nods. "I didn't think you did," she says calmly, giggling as I twirl her around. "You can't be responsible for everything Candice does," she said truthfully 'that woman looks like she loves trouble."

She had that right.

The music peters off and Winter yawns, making me smile down at her. She looks like she's pretty wiped out and swaying slightly on her feet. The poor thing must be exhausted and too afraid to say anything. If I'm honest with myself, I'm pretty wiped out too. Candice had managed to ruin the night for me, and probably for Winter as well. I sigh.

"How about we go back to the hotel room?" I suggested and Winter nodded, letting me drag her to the elevator. We're on the top floor and damn, I'm so hoping that Candice isn't. That's the last thing either of us bloody needs right now.

I help her out of the elevator and take Winter to the last door on the right, using the keycard to open it, opening the door with a flourish and making my mate giggle as she walks in and makes a beeline for the bathroom.

I sat down on the chair and rested my head on my hands. I wanted this to go perfectly and in the course of one night, Winter had to contend with a drunken fool of an Alpha hitting on her and then deal with running into Candice. God, I'm hopeless at this romantic stuff. I just wanted the night to go without a hitch and instead it had gone horribly wrong. I wouldn't be surprised if Winter was angry at me right now for it. She would have every right to be. Hell, I would be if it was me in her shoes.

But when she comes out, she looks remarkably calm. Her hair is slightly disheveled, but to me that just makes her look even more adorable than she already is. Her eyes are sparkling as she looks at me and there's something else on her face, something that I can't quite put my finger on. Was she upset?

"Kai, I want you to know that even though there was that thing with Candice, I had a wonderful night with you," she said, and I stared at her in astonishment. Did she really mean that? I'm almost beaming with pride. She had had a good time then, despite it all. I had pulled it off and given her something to remember.

"I'm glad," I told her honestly., "I thought you would be angry or upset with me about what happened. I really did try to give you a perfect night", I say, and she bites her lip, looking at me, her eyes searching for something like she's trying to come to some sort of decision. I wait. I don't want to interrupt her if she has something on her mind or something she wants to say.

"I know I'm not like Candice" she begins, and I stop her right there, holding a hand up to stop her mid-sentence.

"Whoa" I exclaimed, "you're nothing like Candice and I'm grateful for that. Winter, you're so much better than her. You're kind and warm, you care about the pack, and you're beautiful and sweet. I could go on and on, but do you get the gist? You're my mate and you're the one I want now. Please don't think that I'm comparing you to Candice, because I can tell you, she'd come off as the loser."

Winter giggles, her face smoothing out as she smiles. Is that what she was worried about? That I was somehow comparing her to Candice and finding her lacking? There was no way I would ever do that to her. Not in a million years. Now I feel like a right asshole. How long has Winter possibly been feeling this way, and why haven't I picked up on it?

"I guess we should get ready for bed," I say reluctantly, even though I'm looking forward to going to sleep cuddling Winter. Storm is the same. As long as we get to hold her, the other thing can wait until she's ready. We won't pressure her into doing anything she doesn't want to do. Especially after having gone through such a traumatic experience with that asshole, Thomas. The last thing I want to do is cause her to remember things she doesn't want to.

Winter bites her lip though and eyes me shyly.

"Is something wrong Winter?"

She shakes her head and sits down on the edge of the bed as I stand up. She's avoiding my eyes now and I swear she's blushing. Something is on her mind.

"I want you to make love to me" she mutters and my heart skips a beat.

Did I really hear that right? Had she really just said those words to me? She looks nervous and I have to clarify.

"You want me to make love to you," I say, and she nods.

I hesitate. I don't think she's ready, but I can't deny my cock is twitching at the thought of taking her.

"If you don't want me", Winter mutters, and I kneel beside her, looking deeply into her eyes.

"Winter, it's not that I don't want you, but are you really ready for this? I don't mind waiting if that's what you need. Don't pressure yourself into something that you don't want. It has to be your decision."

She takes a deep breath and stares back, her eyes mesmerizing me. "I want this, Kai, I want you" she pleads and I'm helpless to resist her plea, even as I shrug out of my jacket.

"If that's what you want" I growled in my throat, "then your wish is my command", I finished, my eyes turning pitch black in response.

"Lie down on the bed" I command and she obeys.

"Good girl" I whispered, thinking to myself, let the fun begin.

Chapter 66 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Winter POV

Kai looks so handsome as we go upstairs to our hotel room. He's been chivalrous the entire night and I know the whole debacle with that bitch Candice isn't his fault. No one could have anticipated her being there. I hadn't even given a thought to that woman since she'd been broken up with by Kai. She was like a thorn in the side though, and I would have to keep a careful eye on her. I don't trust her as far as I can throw her. She's up to something, I can sense it. She's out for blood, but she's not getting mine. I refuse to let her intimidate me either. Kai made his choice and that choice was to be with me. Candice was going to have to accept that.

I bit my lip. I've been thinking about this all night and I can't hold back anymore. My body is thrumming with desire and my whole body is trembling, but this is what I want. Now, right here in this hotel room. I spoke quietly "Kai, will you make love to me?" and watched his eyes darken. Of course, the stubborn jackass has to confirm what he's heard for himself, but when he orders me onto the bed, I give a small smile. Something tells me he's been waiting for this and I really didn't need to ask. But he was being a gentleman, waiting until I was ready instead of trying to pressure me.

I'm incredibly nervous but he comes over and kisses me, softly, his lips touching mine, his tongue tracing my lips until I open them, his tongue delving inside and caressing mine as I give a low moan. He begins to pull off my jacket and shirt as I sit up and help him, gently pushing me back down on the mattress as he begins to trail kisses down the nape of my neck, his hands gently touching and squeezing my breasts as I jolt from the pleasure rising up inside of me. I've never felt this way before and it's making me nervous but curious at the same time.

"Kai" I moan and he begins to slide my skirt down, and then my panties as I writhe on the bed. I expect him to come back up, tensing for what I think is about to happen, but instead, he pulls my legs up so that they are bent, firmly holding them in place, so that they are spread wide, staring down at my pussy and licking his lips as I give a shudder. I feel exposed but he's staring at me with a wide smile on his face like he likes it.

He bends his head down, and then with a shriek, I feel the coarseness of his tongue as he begins to lick my pussy up and down, slowly, torturously as I pant and wriggle, his hands never letting go of my legs as my hands clutch at the bedsheets. Fuck. I've never felt this good before and he's showing no signs of letting up, ruthless as he begins to increase the pressure and the intensity, circling my clit as I writhe. Fuck. I'm helpless to do anything but feel the pleasure and he knows it.

"God, Kai", I panted "fuck, oh god", moaning out loud and getting louder the more the pleasure rose.

"Kai" I screamed out his name as I cum, hard against his tongue, Kai never letting up for a second, lapping at my juices as I came crashing back down to earth.

"You taste so good" he moans as my heart flutters wildly in my chest. Every nerve ending of mine is on fire and all I can think about is him and him taking me right now on the bed. I want him with a wildness that scares even me. I'm desperate for him to take his clothes off. I feel incredibly wanton and it doesn't bother me in the slightest.

"I want you" I moan and see his eyes darken as he stands back up and begins to wiggle out of his formal clothes. I almost drool at the sight of his strong muscles and taut abdomen, enjoying looking at his body as he gives a low chuckle, seeing my eyes on him.

"Do you like what you see" he growled, and I nodded. Oh yeah, I did.

"Very much so," I say gently and he growls in his throat, coming towards me as my eyes widen in disbelief. I gulp nervously.

It's large, incredibly so, and with the width of it, I don't actually know if it's going to fit inside me. My mouth goes dry and he senses my fear. My whole body is beginning to tremble in fear and anticipation. How much is this going to hurt?

"Winter, it's okay," he says firmly, heading over to the bedside drawer and coming back with something in his hand. I squint at the shiny packet and then realize he's holding a condom.

"It's your choice," he says calmly. "Do you want me to wear a condom? I don't mind either way," he adds.

So he's asking for my benefit. How sweet of him. He'd come prepared at least.

I have to think about it, but I'm not ready to become a mother just yet and don't exactly want to conceive on my first time doing it. Shifters are extremely fertile. Most get pregnant the first time they do the deed.

"Yes," I whisper and watch as he tears open the packet with his teeth, placing the condom on the tip of his penis and rolling it down the length of him. His eyes stayed on me the entire time, trying to reassure me.

He gets on the bed and leans over me, kissing me softly, hands moving up and down my body. I feel tingles everywhere he touches me and it's not long until I'm fully aroused again, wanting him something fierce, my own hands beginning to explore every inch of him, one hand even going so far as to touch his shaft as he sucks in a gasp. Did I accidentally hurt him?

"Sorry" I whisper shakily, but he shakes his head, eyes almost pitch black as he stares down at me.

"Don't apologize" he whispered. You can touch any part of me you want. I like it, baby girl."

I take a deep breath, "I don't think it's going to fit inside me" I say doubtfully.

He chuckles. "Trust me it will, but I don't want this to be painful for you" he mutters, bending his head down and taking one of my nipples in his mouth as I gasp, kneading my breast with his hand. I arch my back and hiss in pleasure, watching as he does the same to the other breast.

I honestly don't think I can wait any longer. There's this insatiable desire to feel his cock inside of me and, at this rate, I'm going to end up pushing him onto the bed and taking him. Virgin or not.

"Kai" I pleaded, biting my lip "god please, I need to feel you" with a sob and he nodded, quietly shifting himself so that he was right above me.

I can feel his cock at my entrance and he looks at me, making sure I still want this, before he pushes the tip inside slowly, inch by inch as I gasp and stiffen, feeling a slight pain as he pushes himself all the way inside. I groan, the pain stinging between my legs.

"It only hurts the first time" Kai whispers, kissing me on the forehead and stilling, wiping away the tears in the corners of my eyes. He looks apologetic. "Tell me when you're ready for me to move", he adds, and I nod, panting and clutching at the bedcovers until the pain seems to have vanished completely.

"You can move" I mutter and he begins to thrust in and out, slowly and gently, as my eyes widen and my hips begin to take over, moving in rhythm with him. He feels so fucking good, and before long I'm begging him for more, not recognizing myself at all.

"God Kai, harder" I cry at him and he gives a low growl, moving quicker, his thrusts harder as I moan and whimper, crying out his name, my whole body feeling aflame. I'm absolutely shameless as I urge him on more, gripping his shoulders and his waist with my hands, clawing at him wildly. He's groaning in delight, his hands caressing me all over.

Then I feel it. My body is beginning to tense up as pleasure builds up to a point it's almost painful, Kai adjusts his position slightly, his fingers beginning to circle my clit as my back arches and my legs go straight, my mouth opening in a large scream. Fuck. There's no way anybody could sustain this much pleasure and not die from it. I'm certain of it. He's going to kill me at this rate. Then, like a wave, my body tenses and then releases as I scream out wildly, the orgasm so powerful and long that I swear I've died and gone to heaven as Kai continues to pound into me, prolonging the orgasm as I sob.

I hear Kai let out a low growl and then he stills, thrusting once more and growling lowly in his throat, realizing he's come as he slowly withdraws from me. I wince slightly at the feel of his hard cock leaving me and feel pain down below, but this is something I will treasure forever. He had made my first time memorable. I watch him go into the bathroom, presumably to dispose of the condom, and comes back out with a washcloth which he uses to wipe me down as I blush profusely. He's so gentle though and so caring. It's a nice gesture and I appreciate it, even though I feel slightly embarrassed.

I yawn, feeling exhausted, and drained but incredibly happy. Kai looks concerned. "Winter, how about a bath before you fall asleep?" he suggests, and I stare at him. Is this really Kai? Or did I just have sex with a stranger? I love the attention he's giving me, I have to admit.

He goes back into the bathroom and begins to run the water as I awkwardly sit up. It takes one glance down at my thighs and the bedsheets to know why he's suggested it. There's dried blood and a lot of it. Now I feel even more embarrassed, but he seems to be taking it all in stride, picking me up and gently placing me in the water.

"I'll take care of the bedsheets," he tells me, kissing me on the forehead and leaving.

I wallow in the water. It's actually helping with the slight pain and I scrub the dried blood off my thighs and legs, making myself all clean while I wait for him to come back.

He knocks on the door. "Come in," I say tiredly, and he brings in a large fluffy towel, draping it over me as I climb, reluctantly, out of the bath. But if I stay any longer, I'm going to fall asleep. That's how relaxing being in the bath was. We walked back into the bedroom and I saw the sheets had been changed. Kai almost shoved me into bed, taking the towel off and placing bedcovers over me as he got to the other side.

My eyelids are drooping. God, I'm exhausted, but I still smile to myself. Tonight was perfect. Kai was perfect. I couldn't have asked for anything better when it came to my first time. My eyelids flutter closed as Kai gathers me in his arms, snuggling against me, his head tucked into my shoulder as I begin to fall asleep.

The last thing I hear before I pass out completely, to my shock, are the words that Kai whispers in my ear, "I love you."

Chapter 67 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Candice's POV

Ha. I saw the look of shock on that bitch Winter's face when I approached her. She went so pale like she was going to be sick or something and that bastard Alpha Kai? Well, if looks could kill, I would be dead right now. I feel so satisfied even as I fake a moan like I'm actually enjoying what I'm doing right now when all I can think about is having my revenge. Wiping the smile off of that bitch's face. My hands clench into fists. God, I hate that bitch. She's reduced me to taking desperate measures. She's such a plain little thing, that's what I don't understand. What on earth does Kai see in her? How is she better than me? How could he prefer her, to me? It didn't make sense. None of it made sense.

"God, that feels so good" I moan, my hips on either side of Alpha Liam, who's gripping me with his rather large brutish hands, riding his cock at a furious pace. It's a complete lie, but men can be so fucking insecure sometimes. I guess they aren't that much different than women when it comes down to it.

"Fuck" he mutters and I grin, knowing that I have him right where I want him. "Switch" he growls and I climb off him and obediently get on my hands and knees as he orders me. I'm not particularly enjoying myself, but then, sometimes you have to make sacrifices in order to get what you want. This is one sacrifice I'm more than willing to make. Even if there are times, I seriously reconsider what I'm doing. Then I remember the smug look on the bitch's face and I feel myself getting incredibly angry again. She won't know what's coming for her. I get tense and prepare myself for the inevitable.

He slams into me with a hard thrust and I almost lose my balance, his hands gripping my waist painfully, his fingers digging in. I held back my cries. This man enjoys inflicting pain but doesn't like to think he's rough in the bedroom. I really don't get it.

"Take that you little bitch" he mutters, thrusting back and forth as I wiggle my hips and slam back against him, hoping to make this finish sooner rather than later. This is taking longer than I'd like.

If I'm good at anything, it's knowing how to please a man. After all, I learned how to please that bastard Kai, didn't I? Men are like putty in my hands, always have been. All it takes is a pretty face and some flowery words and they are willing to do anything and everything for you. Alpha Liam, had proved to be no different.

"Oh god," I moaned, my hands clenching into the bed sheets. At least he's well endowed, otherwise, I probably would be getting no pleasure at all from this. Not that I'd expected to, it was just a nice surprise to be honest. I gave another moan out loud, trying to keep him pleased.

"You little bitch" he murmured, changing the pace and the intensity. I let him degrade me. Hell, he can do anything he wants if it means that he'll help me get my revenge. I don't even care if he gets even

rougher. I can take it. There are times when he's extremely rough and I've encouraged it. I need this man to want me so badly that he's willing to do anything for me. I've finally achieved that goal.

"Fuck, harder" I make myself shriek and he obliges, grabbing me by my hair and pulling it as he fucks me, little groans coming out of his mouth. I can feel him beginning to tense and know that he's got to be close. Shame. I haven't exactly had my pleasure yet. My hand goes down to my clit and I begin to massage it furiously, my walls clenching down around his cock as he gives a loud growl. I'll be damned if I don't at least get a fucking orgasm from this, that's for sure. The pleasure builds and I swear, the orgasm rushing over me, as my body tenses and stiffens, my cry loud as I cum. This makes him even more excited and he begins to pound me as rough and hard as he can before he too, stiffens, thrusting hard one last time and letting out a ferocious growl as he spills his seed, inside of me. I frown. Thank god for birth control, something else he has no idea I'm on. But there's no way in hell that I want to be a mother, not ever. I hate children, always have. Something I'd lied to Kai about. The bastard loved children, it never occurred to him to wonder why I never got pregnant. Idiot. Especially considering he never once used a fucking condom. Claimed he didn't like the feel of it, but I know it was just in the hopes of having a child of his own. I've never once forgotten to take a birth control pill.

He pulls out and then lies down on the bed, panting, his face a little red from the exertion. It is not a good look, but I forced myself to smile at him. "That was the best sex I've ever had". I lie to his face and he gives me a grin. Men are such simple creatures.

"Better than Alpha Kai's" he growls, looking at me intently.

"Way better", I assured him. Men with their bloody egos. Everything has to be a goddamn competition. Including the size of their bloody cocks.

Alpha Liam looks pleased. I know he's long been a rival to Kai and that's exactly why I chose the man. All I had to do was flatter him and let slip that I was his ex-girlfriend and Alpha Liam had been all too willing to take me along to the summit as his date and rub it in Kai's face. We've been dating for over a month and he's been putty in my hands the entire time. Sex is all it's taken to make him amiable to my suggestions. Then again, isn't that all men really want? Sex whenever they demand it and a willing woman beneath them? He sure as hell hadn't wanted a proper girlfriend. With the brutish way he treats me whenever we're not having sex, it's no surprise to me why he hasn't had a serious relationship before. Because truth be told, he's a bit of a dick and a real asshole.

"Alpha Kai is nothing compared to you," I said, stroking his ego and giving him a long kiss. He kisses me back, his tongue delving into my mouth as I try not to gag. God, I can't stand him, let alone his tongue, lips, or any part of him, if I'm particularly honest with myself. But my desire for revenge is what keeps

me going. I still haven't gotten over the fact that Kai dumped me after so long together or that he's chosen to be with Winter as his mate. She's so pathetic, so weak, he should have dumped her for me. I was the perfect Luna. I was the one who broke up with men, not the other way around. Without me, Kai would be nothing, not even close to the Alpha he was. He should be thanking me for building him up so much. For being able to look past those hideous scars enough to even have sex with him. I know plenty of other girls have rejected his advances because of them. That's one of the reasons why I approached him in the first place. Because I figured he would make me Luna in appreciation of being with him. But he hadn't and now he had to pay for mistreating me, and for picking that pathetic bitch Winter.

"That girl Winter," Liam says casually as I throw him a scorching glance. "She's the one you told me about, isn't she? The one you want revenge on?"

"Yes," I said heatedly, "she deliberately broke up Alpha Kai and me by lying to the pack. She's not even his real mate" I said with a growl. "She tricked him into marking her. I was in love with him, and she ruined it. She's nothing but a homewrecker" I said, laying it on thick. I even blink back tears from my eyes, fake ones of course.

It's all a lie, but men hear what they want to hear. This man is no different. They are so oblivious to my lies, but then again, I am one hell of an actress. Perhaps I should have been one for my career.

"His loss is my gain" growls Alpha Liam and I give him a cuddle, frowning over his shoulder.

"Yes," I said sweetly, "but I still want my revenge on that girl for ruining my life", I added, and he frowned. He looks uncertain, and I know I'm going to have to push him to do what I want. He'll come around, even if I have to perform certain sexual favors on the Alpha to get what I want.

"I understand that," he says grimly "I've always hated that bastard, Kai. He always comes across as so arrogant, it makes me want to strangle him with my bare hands. It's like he thinks he's better than me", he huffs.

"I know" I murmured "he's cocky and by taking revenge we're hitting him where it will hurt the most. You get your revenge on him, and I get mine", I added.

"I like the sound of that" Liam says with a wicked grin, picking me up as I give a shriek and, walking to the bathroom. He starts the shower and places me down, joining me inside. I almost wanted to roll my

eyes. Of course, he wanted more sex. How could I have thought he was finished? The man was insatiable. Like a teenager with a constant hard on. With the energy of one as well. I sigh. I guess I'm going to have to do some more acting.

He places me leaning against the tiles, my back towards him and I roll my eyes. Christ. How much more could he possibly want? He lines his cock up at my entrance and thrusts inside as I give a long moan, my eyes staring directly at the tiles in the shower, as I fight to keep my balance on the slippery floor. Not that Liam notices. If anything, he just thrusts inside of me even harder.

"That man" Liam pants between thrusts "is going to get what he deserves. I promised you, didn't I" he mutters, and I tip my head back, the water rushing over me. I clench my walls and hear him give a growl, smiling in satisfaction. This will be over soon. Good.

"When will you take care of it" I whisper, meeting his thrusts, rolling my hips backward as I keep up with his hurried pace. "When will I finally have my revenge?" I ask.

"Soon" he growls, "soon my love, and that girl will never do anything more to you ever again", he promises.

I lean my head against the tiles and let him take me, my thoughts on Winter and what I know will happen to her soon. I can't wait to break Kai's heart the same way he's broken mine. To see the tears streaming down his face and the grief as he deals with the death of his mate. I can't wait to see the devastation I unleash on my ex-boyfriend. The worst thing is, he'll never even know it was me. I and Liam took care of that and made sure I had an alibi. Adios Winter, I think wickedly, you're about to get everything you deserve, you little bitch, and I'm going to have a front-row seat to what happens to you.

Chapter 68 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Kai POV

I can't believe that Winter gave me the most precious gift she had to give me last night. She was so willing, so perfect and the trust she showed in me is absolutely humbling. She was so tight, my cock twitched just thinking about it. If she hadn't been a virgin, I might have tried to persuade her to do it more than once. As it was, I was worried that she might have nightmares or bad memories because of that son of a bitch, Thomas, but she slept soundly next to me, snuggled right beside me as I watched

her, fascinated and just in awe of this mate of mine. It's like I've done a complete turnaround, but it's one that's for the better. There's no way I can bring myself to hurt Winter. I don't want to see sadness or grief on her face anymore, only happiness. I don't want to be the one who makes her cry, not anymore.

I'm careful when climbing out of bed. She's still sleeping and I don't want to disturb her after last night. I showered quickly, deciding that going downstairs to the summit would be the best thing while Winter gets a much-needed rest. However, I scribble her a quick note, not wanting her to think I have abandoned her. I hesitated, wondering if maybe she would prefer to be woken up, but she had so little sleep last night that, in the end, I left her be and headed out the door and downstairs to the meeting room where, no doubt, other Alphas and Lunas are milling about. Who knows how long it will be until she wakes up? She really needed her rest after what we did last night. She could meet me later.

My Beautiful Winter/mate

Last night was wonderful and I'm honored by the precious gift you bestowed on me. I will never take it for granted.

I didn't want to disturb you while you were sleeping. I figured you needed your rest.

I will be in the meeting room when you are ready to join me. Take your time, there's no rush

Love your mate, Kai.

However, I'd no sooner gotten into the meeting room, my stomach growling with hunger, the buffet table directly in my sights when Candice stops me in my tracks. I look for Alpha Liam, rather hoping he would put a stop to this, but there's no sign of him to my disgust. The last thing I want to do is force myself to talk to this bitch. My hands clench into fists. Storm wants to rip her into shreds, no matter how many witnesses there are. I have to force my wolf and myself to calm down.

She bats her eyelashes at me. As usual, she's dressed in a skin-tight dress that molds to her curves and shows off her assets. Her makeup is perfect and her heels clack loudly on the floor. To me, she resembles a Barbie doll and I don't find her appearance attractive at all. Winter very rarely puts makeup on and I find I much prefer her natural beauty instead. She's beautiful without it, perfect in fact. I stand still, resigned, wondering what the hell Candice wants now, of all things. Wasn't she dating Alpha Liam? Shouldn't he be glued to her side? Couldn't she just stay with that bastard and leave me the fuck alone?

She puts a hand on my arm and I flinch, carefully removing it as she pouts at me, her eyes feigning hurt. I almost want to scoff at her pathetic acting. What on earth is she thinking? She knows how much I despise her, so what is she playing at?

"Kai" she breathes, "there's really no need for you to act this way towards me. We were boyfriend and girlfriend for a long time. Don't you think you could at least be civil towards me? I didn't mean what I said to you, I was just hurt by your rejection of me", she added as I stared at her incredulously. She's lying. I can tell. Besides, screw her. The last thing I want to be is civil to the bitch.

Is she for real? Does she really want me to pretend that the insults she threw at me were just because I was breaking up with her? Because there had been an element of truth in them. What on earth is she playing at? What's with all this false pretense of hers?

She moves closer and I have to fight the urge to back away. After all, there is a crowd milling around us and the last thing I want to do is cause a scene. The bitch knows it too. Storm, on the other hand, would be more than delighted to create a scene, regardless of all the witnesses. I'm really tempted to let him. But I have to be polite at a summit unless I want to be ostracised by other packs.

"Can't you see that I was in love with you, Kai" she exclaims dramatically, "you were my whole world, and then all of a sudden you're breaking up with me as though I meant nothing to you" she says, hurt. Like she can talk, considering the insults she threw my way when we broke up.

I shift uncomfortably, noting that there are several Lunas and Alphas openly staring at the both of us, disapproval in their eyes. You don't have the full story, I want to shout out in my defense, but instead, I grit my teeth and take a deep breath.

"You know that I found my mate, Candice. I couldn't fight the mate bond anymore. I'm sorry if that hurt you, but I'm with my mate now and I'm happy" I said grimly. God, let her just walk away now. Now I wish I'd waited for Winter to wake up, then I could have avoided this awkward conversation. Next time, I will wake her up.

She began to sob. Damn, she's a good actress, sounding slightly hysterical. "We were together over a year and in that time you could have made me your chosen mate. Why didn't you?" she cried.

I shifted on my feet, sighing deeply. "I didn't want a mate," I told her honestly, "and you knew that."

"But you chose to be with Winter" she wails. "You chose your mate, even when you didn't want one. So you're lying."

"Yes," I said tightly. "I changed my mind." Thank god I had. Looking at Candice now, I can't believe I ever dated her. She's so shallow, so vain. She never loved me, that I'm certain of. The Luna title was all she was after and now it's slipped through her fingers. Bad luck. I never would have given her the title anyway, so she wasted over a year of her life for nothing.

"We could go back to those happier times" she tries to whisper, and I step back and shake my head firmly, absolutely repulsed by her suggestion. I fight back the urge to vomit.

"My mate and I are marked," I said with a growl, watching her eyes widen in disbelief. How on earth had she not noticed the marks? I look at her neck and sure enough, she's still unmarked, her neck absolutely bare of any tattoos. So Liam hadn't made her his chosen mate yet. Interesting. Her moves speak of desperation. Was Liam getting sick of her crap now as well? Or was he just being sensible?

There's the sound of footsteps and Candice's eyes widen before she visibly relaxes. Alpha Liam joins our small group, his eyes narrowed in displeasure. Is he annoyed to find the two of us together? Because I sure as hell didn't start this conversation and I would be delighted to finish it and get some damn breakfast. My stomach growls in hunger.

"Alpha Kai," Liam says, greeting me with a small nod, his eyes icy cold.

"Alpha Liam" I returned, acknowledging him with tight lips and a grim expression on my face. I've never liked this man but honestly couldn't say why. It was just an instant feeling of dislike and the feeling was mutual, judging by the way he spoke to me.

"Candice, my dear" Alpha Liam said with a smile that Candice instantly returned. "I went looking for you when you disappeared from the bedroom. Is something the matter?" he asked smoothly.

Candice shook her head and stared at me with hard eyes, "I was just having a delightful conversation with Alpha Kai" she said tightly, and Alpha Liam took hold of her hand and kissed it. Yuck.

'Well, if you're finished" Alpha Liam said quietly, "then perhaps we could get some breakfast and sit down together?" he suggested.

She nodded and shot me a look so full of hatred that I couldn't quite believe her audacity. Then she flipped her long hair over her shoulder and gave Alpha Liam a brilliant smile.

"I would be delighted" she purred, flouncing off as Liam stared at her. He turned to me, his jaw clenched, and his eyes narrowed.

"Stay the hell away from my girl" he growls, "she's mine now."

Good riddance, I think to myself.

"You can have her", I growl back and he gives a huff and walks over to her as I watch in relief. Finally, some peace and quiet. I can finally feed my hungry stomach which is growling profusely in its desperate need to be fed,

I happily fill my plate with all sorts of scrumptious treats, making my way to an empty table. I'm not in the mood for conversation right now. But I'd no sooner bitten into a piece of bacon when there was a sudden commotion in the room. I place the bacon down with a sigh and see security bustling toward someone who's shrieking hysterically. Thank god it's not Candice.

"There's a girl in the elevator" the girl was screaming. "She's been attacked and she's bleeding everywhere."

My stomach churns. I get up and push through the crowd, not caring if it's an Alpha, in my determination to get towards the elevator. I'm praying that I'm wrong, that my instincts are incorrect for once, but as I reach the elevator, I see her. My god. I'm sick to my stomach. Who would have the guts to do something like this, at a summit full of werewolves for goodness sake? Fuck. I've failed her, yet again.

She's so pale but it's the amount of blood everywhere that gets me as I get inside, security shooting me wary looks as I kneel beside her. There's so much blood. I don't know what to do and I feel absolutely helpless.

"She's my mate" I yelled and turned to them, my eyes pitch black now, my fury visible for everyone to see "find out whoever attacked her and do it now."

Someone squeezes into the elevator with me and I turn, ready to attack anyone who dares to attack my mate. "I'm a doctor," he says, hands up in surrender "let me deal with her. Please" he added softly, and I grudgingly let him kneel beside her, checking her vitals. My eyes scan the crowds. Whoever has done this to my mate, would be answering to me, whether the security team liked it or not. They would be dying a slow painful death for their treachery and for daring to even lay a finger on my mate, who's now lying there still as a statue.

"She's still breathing", the doctor announces, and I close my eyes, thanking god she's not dead. Without a word, the crowd disperses to leave me and the doctor alone, the security team swarming away on a desperate manhunt. They had better get to the attacker first, because if I got my hands on them, he would be screaming for mercy and to let him die.

Chapter 69 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Winter POV

I wake up and am slightly disappointed to find that Kai has already left and gone down to the summit. But he'd been considerate enough to leave a note so that I didn't feel abandoned and he apparently had wanted me to have a bit of a sleep-in. I couldn't really fault him for that. So I slowly climb out of bed and head to the bathroom, wincing slightly at the pain and stinging between my legs. A bath is definitely in order. I smile, though, remembering last night and what happened between the both of us. It's definitely a memory that I'm going to cherish. For my first time, it was absolutely perfect. Everything about it was just magical.

I take my time, luxuriating in the bubble bath, closing my eyes as the pain starts to fade again. I can't get the memory of last night out of my mind. Kai had been so gentle and so loving and my first time had been more incredible than even I had imagined. He was truly a changed man and my heart was full, so full of love for this man who was showing me just what love really felt like. I've never felt like this towards anyone before, not even my brother. This love, this adoration, it's all completely new to me, and if I'm honest, it's frightening as all hell. I'm in love and I can't imagine my life without this man in it. How's that for being obsessed with him? I don't even know if he feels the same way. I know he loves me, but just how much? Enough that he can't live without me either? I hope so. I know he's protective of me

and I know his wolf, Storm, loves me and Sabriel. To be fair, I love his wolf as well. I found Storm to be the perfect compliment to Kai's personality.

I hum under my breath as I wrap a towel around myself and head into the bedroom. I look at all my clothes with a critical eye. I don't particularly like dresses, but I'm willing to dress up a little, maybe turn Kai's head. If anything, it will show just how much I appreciate the man, won't it? Besides, he likes it when I dress up. I see the way his eyes light up when he sees me. Then I frowned. He lights up no matter what I wear. So I guess it's really entirely up to me what I want to wear today. Something that's nice, I decide, without being overkill. I want to at least be able to walk around and maybe even dance with Kai again.

I dressed in another skirt and dressy blouse, my leather jacket of course on top. I love this leather jacket. There's nothing it doesn't go with. I finish up with a pair of dressy heels, ones that are short enough I won't embarrass myself by tripping over them. Wouldn't that be something for everyone to see? I definitely cringe at the thought of humiliating myself in front of such a large crowd of both Alphas and Luna's. Not to mention Kai. I shudder.

I headed down to the elevator. It seems lazy, but the last thing I want to do is go down a bunch of stairs, especially considering we're on the top floor. Plus, there's the whole heels thing. It would be dangerous, I thought to myself, to take the stairs in these beautiful shoes. The elevator is empty, except for one person, a young girl who's right in the back corner, keeping to herself. She's wearing a hoodie so I can't fully see her face and sweatpants. She mustn't be part of the summit then, but she sure as hell smells like a shifter to me. I shrug. It's none of my business. I'm not about to judge her by what she's wearing, even if it does surprise me somewhat. Maybe she's an omega that was brought here to help serve the guests? But then wouldn't she be wearing a uniform?

"Good morning", I greet her cheerfully as I step inside, but she stares at me rather coldly and stays silent.

Geez, what's up her butt, I thought to myself, slightly disgruntled now, as I pressed the button for the ground floor. I was only trying to be friendly for heaven's sake. I guess not everyone is in a good mood today.

The elevator gives a lurch and I grip the railing. Man, I hate these things. I hate small spaces in general, to be fair, anything that seems like a confined space. Always have. The woman remains quiet and I dismiss her, staring ahead when she suddenly moves. Even then, I foolishly just look ahead, assuming she's making her way to the door for when it opens. There's nothing about her that screams danger and that proves to be my downfall.

Instead, I feel something pierce the flesh in my shoulder and I cry out, my skin bubbling and burning. The woman reaches over and presses the emergency stop button as she pulls the silver dagger out and I hiss, my eyes wide. This is a trap. This is an ambush, but why me? This doesn't make any sense. I've never seen this woman before in my life. Which can only mean that someone was paying her to do this to me. I bet it's that fucking Candice. My hands clench into fists even though I'm extremely unsteady on my feet. Damn the silver. It's so potent and dangerous for werewolves.

"Why are you doing this?" I wheeze but the woman says nothing. Her eyes just narrow as she stares at me calmly.

I can't shift, I realize, when I frantically try. In fact, I can't even hear Sabriel. There's something dripping from the end of the dagger and the woman gives me a cold smile. "Wolfsbane", I breathe out in disgust "you laced the dagger with wolfsbane."

No wonder I can't hear Sabriel or mind-link, I realize, which means that I can't mind-link Kai for help. I'm on my own.

The woman lunges towards me and I sidestep just in time, wrestling with her for the knife. She kicks me in my midsection and I double over, screaming as the dagger is stabbed in my side and pulled back out. God, it hurts, the pain is excruciating and it's spreading throughout my entire body. Not only that, but blood is welling up from my wounds and dripping onto the floor. I'm not going down without a fight though. I won't give her the satisfaction of watching me give up. Besides, I have a hell of a lot to live for, including Kai. This bitch is going to have to work at it.

The next time she rushes me, I slam my fist against her face, hard, hitting her directly on the nose as she howls. Take that, you bitch, I think, with a scowl. I kick her while she's clutching her face, but she doesn't let go of the dagger and drags it down my leg as she falls. Fuck. God that hurts like a bitch.

I fall to the ground, clutching my leg, watching as she gets back up. There was nothing but coldness in her eyes and determination etched on her face. I feel helpless but I stand, putting my weight on the other foot. All I can think about is Kai. I don't want to die, especially not when my mate is finally showing me just how much he loves me. I'm not ready to leave this world just yet and I'll be damned if I let this woman get the best of me. I don't even know why she's attacking, but some part of me knows instinctively that someone's put her up to it. Someone whose name is probably Candice. Not that I have time to accuse the woman of that, she's moving around so bloody fast.

She raises her arm and goes to stab me. I grabbed her arm in midair and twisted it, causing her to yelp as I thrust my head forward and heard a sickening crack. This time her nose has well and truly been broken, I see, with a huge sense of satisfaction. The knife has fallen to the ground and I limp over, bending down to pick it up, wrinkling my nose at the heavy smell of the wolfsbane it appears to be coated in. This woman wasn't taking any chances, was she? The smell is disgusting and fills the air of the elevator.

The woman's eyes are wide in horror as she gets to her feet. "Who sent you" I demanded, even as my voice is hoarse from my yells and my vision was becoming somewhat blurry. I need to know who set this up. I'm tired of my life being in danger all the time, tired of always having to look over my shoulder in fear. This ends today.

The woman shakes her head. "I can't tell you," she says in a gravelly voice, "they'll kill me."

They? It was more than one person who wanted me dead? Are you freaking kidding me? So much for thinking it was just Candice. Who else have I managed to piss off?

"You're coming with me" I growled, shaking my head as spots appeared in my vision. "You can tell security everything" I, snarled.

I press the buttons for the ground floor, but as the elevator lurches again she darts towards me, kicking the dagger out of my hand, sending me flying to the floor as the elevator continues to move.

I watch, trying to scramble to my feet, hands slipping and sliding as I realize the entire elevator is covered in blood splatters and trails, blood that belongs to me. There's a look of hesitation on her face before she plunges the dagger into me once more, my hand swinging out wildly as she pulls back.

"It has to be enough" the woman mutters in a low voice, so quiet, I almost miss it. "There's so much wolfsbane in her system that it's impossible for her to survive this" she breathes. Is she talking to herself?

"Fuck you" I wheezed. I keep swinging out wildly, my legs kicking, but she's too far away to reach now and I'm not entirely sure

I have the strength to stand back up right now.

I'm frantically looking towards the doors, the woman hiding in the corner now. Maybe someone will be on the other side, someone who will be able to help me. It's all I can hope for. The elevator doors open with a loud ping and I lower my head in resignation. There's no one there. The woman looks triumphant, edging out of the elevator. I hear her footsteps racing away as she makes a run for it.

"Help" I rasp out, "somebody help me."

Kai, I think woozily, Kai, I need you to come and find me. I cough up blood and lie completely down, feeling extremely weak, spots dancing in my vision which is fast becoming blurry. I'm a goner. There's no way I'm going to survive this. It would be a miracle. My one regret is that Kai didn't know where I was or that I was coming downstairs. I should have mind-linked him. That would have been the smart thing to do. But then, I hadn't exactly anticipated being attacked at a summit by werewolves for goodness' sake. This should have been one of the safest places to be. I had thought I was safe here. The irony.

My head lowers to the ground. I'm cold now, so unbearably cold. My eyes are beginning to flutter shut of their own accord. I don't have the strength to hold on for much longer. The last thing I hear as my eyes close and darkness surrounds me is the sound of a woman hysterically screaming. I wonder if I just got my miracle.

Chapter 70 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Kai POV

I'm absolutely ropeable. How on earth did Winter get attacked at a summit full of werewolves for fuck's sake? The security team has dispersed, seeking out camera footage and the only one permitted even near her at the moment is the blasted doctor. I hover near the bed where she's been placed while the doctor does his best to ignore me and the low grows I'm giving out every few seconds. Storm is dangerously close to the surface and it's taking all my willpower not to shift and cause a panic. Shifting would be a very bad idea, even if I wanted to hurt someone right now and cause damage to everything that's in my path. I have to keep Storm back for everyone's sake, even if I'm tempted to let him go berserk. It would serve everyone right.

"How is she?" I demanded and the doctor sighed, looking up at me with a woebegone expression. I tense.

It's not the first time I've asked and it damn well won't be the last. He can just deal with my presence whether he likes it or not. He sees the look in my eyes and speaks with me, trying not to let his impatience show. Good, he does not want to push me right now, not while I'm this insanely angry.

"She's resting for now. I've bandaged her wounds and attached an IV. I'm concerned though because there appears to be wolfsbane in her system. I'm trying to flush it out, but it's going to take a while."

I stopped in my tracks. Wolfsbane. No wonder Winter couldn't mind-link me when she was in trouble. The guilt is eating me alive. I should never have left her there in that room, I should have just waited until she got up and escorted her downstairs. I'm a complete imbecile. My hands are clenched into fists. I'm so angry, but a lot of the anger is directed at myself.

There's a knock on the door and the security team comes hustling in, one of them, presumably the head honcho, so to speak, comes forward to speak to me. I glower at him. He better have some goddamn answers for me.

"Alpha Kai" he greets me stiffly "I would like to speak to you in private" he murmurs, shooting a look at the doctor, who is still hovering over Winter, who is lying deathly still on the bed.

"I don't think this is the right time" I shot out impatiently, but he merely raised an eyebrow at me.

He's cool as a cucumber. I can't believe it. How does he stay so damn calm?

"I believe you'll want to be here for this. We have the person responsible and are about to interrogate them" he answers smoothly.

That has me whipping my head around fast. They had found who had attacked Winter, this quickly. How? A good job, I think, impressed in spite of myself.

"Where did you find them?" I growled.

"She was trying to escape through a loading dock. One of my security officers thought that her being there was unusual even though she'd dressed in a uniform she probably stole from somewhere. It was lucky he stopped her and restrained her, otherwise, she would be long gone and we'd never have caught her."

So it was a she, I thought to myself. Interesting. I looked the security officer direct in the eyes, liking that he didn't look away. "Take me to this interrogation", I ordered, and he nodded, motioning for me to follow him.

I hesitated in the doorway. The doctor gave me a knowing look. "Nothing is going to happen to her" I growled, and he gave a small nod.

"Two of my men will stay behind to make sure nothing more will happen to your mate" the leader promises, and I have to contend myself with that, as we walk downstairs to an office which he pushes open.

I was in shock as I gazed down at a young girl. She looks more like a teenager. She's clearly a shifter though, because I can sense her wolf, but she looks so young and so innocent. Not to mention I've never seen her before in my life and I'm willing to lay bets that Winter hasn't ever seen this girl before. Well, not until this morning anyway. I wrinkle my nose. There's the smell of blood all over the girl, the metallic scent and my eyes widen in anger as I step inside the office, the leader of the security team directly behind me, as he closes and locks the door, I glare down at the girl. I can smell my mate's blood all over her and Storm is going nuts, ready to tear this girl to shreds. I had to put a mental block up, preventing him from taking control. He's not pleased with me.

She's been restrained with silver cuffs to the table and looks miserable. She's pale, ashen. Her lip is quivering. I feel no satisfaction in this. Something seems wrong about this entire scenario. Still, I advance on her.

"Why did you try to kill my mate" I thundered and she flinched, biting her lip but refusing to speak.

God help me for what I'm about to do. I grab hold of her head and smack it on the table. She hits the corner and begins to bleed. I harden my heart. She's attacked, my mate. I'm not about to feel sorry for her.

"You attacked my mate" I repeated and she still says nothing, but I can see her whole body is trembling as she sits in the chair, unable to move away due to her restraints which are burning her skin.

I glanced over at the security guy who was standing there with his arms folded. Finally, I caught a glance at his name badge. It reads Teddy. It's almost enough to make me smile. Imagine a big hulking guy with a name like Teddy. The irony. He seems unfazed by the violence I'm exhibiting towards his prisoner.

"You might as well talk," Teddy says casually, walking over to the table. I hadn't even stopped to notice the knife that was in a white transparent bag. "We found the knife and the victim's scent was all over you. There's no way you're getting out of here alive" he said, and even I flinched. It might seem a little harsh, but it was a violent attack and Winter could have died. Still might be because of this girl.

"If I'm going to die, then what's the point of talking," the girl says harshly, and I'm taken aback. So she does have a voice after all.

"Listen," I said, slamming my hands on the table so hard that it made her jump "I've never seen you before and neither has my mate. That in itself is suspicious. What reason could you possibly have for the attack? My mate's never done a thing to you." At least I'm reasonably sure of that. Somehow, I can't picture Winter having done anything bad toward anybody, let alone hurt another human being. It's not in her nature.

The girl looked away. She looks like she's about to cry now. I narrowed my eyes at her. Something's off. You don't attack someone and then cry about it. At least not that I've ever seen anyway.

"I can't talk" she finally says, not looking at me or Teddy, who now looks extremely interested.

"Why not," I demanded heatedly, "did someone put you up to this? We can't help you if you won't even help yourself", I added with a low growl. Nailed it. The second I asked if someone put her up to it, she went paler than a ghost. A dead giveaway.

"I'm going to die anyway, you just said it," the girl said dully.

"Not if you were put up to it," I said with a scowl, glancing over at Teddy, who is nodding in agreement. The girl looks hopeful but then looks down at the floor.

I grab hold of the dagger, opening the bag enough to show the blade as she flinches. "I will cut your fingers off, one by one, if you don't tell me what I need to know", I threatened.

Now she looks absolutely terrified. Good. Still, she refuses to speak. Teddy doesn't make a move. He knows this is between her and me.

I force her hand down on the table as she wriggles and squirms. I spread her fingers out and lined up the knife. This is going to hurt like a bitch, but she needs to start talking.

"One more chance," I said, the dagger raised in my hand.

Tears formed in her eyes but she said nothing.

I bring the dagger down on her finger and sever it completely as she screams. Blood spurts everywhere and Teddy somehow finds some bandages to bandage it.

"Fuck" she yells and I merely raise my eyebrows at her.

"Talk" I spit out. She sobs wildly at me.

"I can't" she cried out.

"Can't or won't" I grunted out, raising the dagger again as Teddy moved away.

"They'll kill me," she says and I stop, glancing over at Teddy. "You don't understand" she sniffles, "they have my family and they'll kill them."

Now we're getting somewhere. Though it pains me, I raise the dagger again. "Speak" I mutter.

She says nothing and I grimace, severing another finger as she screams and howls, her flesh burning and effectively cauterizing the wound from the silver.

"No more" she pleads, sobbing "please no more."

"Then talk" I thundered impatiently, "because I will cut every finger off if you don't start speaking. Who has your family?"

She looks away. There are tear stains on her face and tears trickling down her cheeks. When she finally speaks, it's in a wavery, shaky voice that's full of fear.

"Alpha Liam has my family. He told me if I didn't kill your mate, then he would kill them when he got home. I didn't have a choice."

I'm puzzled though and a bit suspicious. "Why would he want my mate dead? He'd never even met Winter before the summit. Sure, we don't like each other, but that's no reason to kill my mate."

"It's that girl" she cries and I stiffen. "Ever since she came along, he's been different. Changed. He's no longer the nice Alpha he used to be. She has him wrapped around her finger and everyone in the pack hates her."

"Candice," I said slowly, and the girl gave me a nod.

"I would bet anything it was her idea. She hates your mate and she hates that you broke up with her. It's all she ever talks about" the girl sniffled.

That bitch. I was going to kill her. Teddy was looking nonchalantly at me. "What would you have us do?"

"Alpha Liam is your problem" I muttered "I want Candice restrained and taken back to my pack. She's not getting off lightly this time, the traitorous bitch. I should have killed her before."

Teddy raised his eyebrows but gave a firm nod, before hesitating and swinging his chin towards the young girl who was sobbing wildly and looking hysterical.

"What's her name?" I asked quietly.

"Chantelle," Teddy said, "what do you want to be done with her?"

Chantelle's head swings around and she looks at me pleadingly.

"Let her go free. She's already lost two fingers today as punishment and she didn't have a choice", I murmured as the girl's eyes lighted up "make sure her family is OK as well", I ordered.

"Done" Teddy agrees, fetching a key and undoing Chantelle's restraints. "But she needs to stay here while we apprehend the other two and you can't interfere either," he tells me. I nodded reluctantly. I have to let them do their jobs. Chantelle is agreeable as well.

"I'll be in the room with Winter when you're done," I said coldly, storming away. I can't wait to get my hands on that bitch Candice and show her what happens to those that try and harm my mate. She's gone way too far this time. I began to plot my revenge.