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7. Kaya

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The nurse looked directly at me. "Where does it hurt the worst?" I pointed to my ribs. In truth, they were on fire. Every time I breathed, they felt like they were being punched again. I knew I had cracked several. Annalise surely could throw a punch, but I could do something better. I could take it. It gave me the upper hand.

I had won the fight. She would think next time she wanted to put her grubby little hands on my mate. Man, I was possessive. The thought of how possessive it made me laugh. But then I shuddered at the pain that caused. "Can you show me your ribs?"

I nodded. I got out of bed and was about to take my dress off when it occurred to me that both my brother and my mate were sitting there looking right at me. I had shifted around my brother before, so it was not new to him what I looked like, but I still didn't want him staring at me.

Unlike when we shifted back home, no one considered how anyone looked. It was just a part of nature. But here in this room, when it was just the four of us, it seemed way too much like I would be on display. Not to mention, I didn't want this to be the first time Cade saw me topless. So, if I pulled up my dress, everything would be on display. I mind-linked my brother.

"Can you ask if she has a blanket to cover up with?" He asked, and she did one even better and got out a gown of some sort. The men stepped outside so I could get situated. I took off my dress and slipped the gown over me. I was still wearing my pants that went under my dress, so I didn't have to worry about covering that area up. "Okay, you can come back in."

Cade and Quill came back and sat down in the two chairs. "I need you to show me your ribs now." "I lifted the gown and looked down at my smooth, tan abdomen. It was covered in deep purple all along the sides. The woman's eyes became wide at the sight of my stomach. "We will get you an x-ray as soon as possible."

Then she left the room, leaving just the three of us. I looked at my brother and began talking to him through our link. "X-rays, huh?" "Looks like." "What is it like you think?" "I don't know?" "Ask Cade." "What?" "Go on, please. I bet he will know."

Quill turned to Cade. After a moment, Cade looked at me. I focused on his mouth. Oh, his mouth; I thought about how not too long ago they were on mine. I wanted to have

them on mine again. If he was kissing me, I bet I wouldn't be in so much pain. Wait a second, I thought to myself. Mates do tend to make things less painful. I should have recognized it sooner. When he was caring me, I was not in half the pain I was experiencing. I tell Quill.

"Can you ask Cade to come over to the bed? I want to touch him." "Yeah, it would make you feel better. The next thing Cade did was scoot his chair close to the bed and grabbed my hand. As soon as we touch, I feel instant relief. I was still in pain, but it was much duller.

"Quill, what did he say about the x-ray." "He already told you, did you not see his mouth or something." "No, I zoned out; what did he say." "He said that it is a machine that won't hurt you; it just takes pictures of your bones."

"I know what it does. I just wanted to know if it hurt." "Well, he said it doesn't." I knew some of the medical practices down here, but we have yet to use such things in the north. A healer, not a doctor, would tend to you when you were injured. They would set bones, make salves, that kind of thing.

When I had fallen through the ice, and my ears became damaged, they used tattooing to alleviate the pain. It had worked, and I was all the better for it. But down here, everything was so sterile. It was a place I didn't want to be.

We waited for what seemed like a long time, and then the nurse returned, and she had a wheelchair with her. "I am just going to take you up to x-ray." "Quill, tell her I am walking." "No, it would be best if I wheeled you." "Quill, I am not going to be in that wheelchair."

"Fine, you want to walk, then be my guest." I got up and followed her out of the room. It didn't take long, and before I knew it, I was back in the small room with Quill and Cade; after what seemed like forever, a man with a mustache finally came in. He looked directly at me. I assume the nurse had filled him in on my condition.

"You have broken 6 ribs. Have a black eye and most likely a concussion. "I have had worse, I think to myself. "I would like to keep you for observation." I just shake my head. There is no way I am wasting another minute in this place. "I really must insist."

"Quill, tell everyone to get out. I want to get dressed." Quill did as I asked, and the men left the room. I am sure the doctor thought I just wanted to be more comfortable, but I left the room when I had my dress back on. "Kaya, what are you doing." "I am leaving now. Come on, let's go."

I didn't need to ask twice with Quill. He knew I had been through worse and saw no reason for me to stay in this sterile environment. He would ensure I woke up every few hours like he had done several times back home when I hit my head being knocked around in training.

When we got outside, Cade looked at me. "So, I take it you don't like the doctors. "I shrugged. I didn't have a problem with healers back home, but doctors themselves were not my cup of tea. They took everything so seriously, and insignificant things suddenly were a crisis. I mind-linked my brother. "I am tired."

"Yeah, it is late. We should head back to the hotel. I looked at Cade. I wondered how this was going to work. Was he going to be coming back to the hotel with us? Was he staying at this pack? What was going to happen tomorrow when we set off for home. I even wondered if he was alone here. Had someone from his pack come with him."

There were just so many questions that needed to be answered. All that could have been done if Annalise hadn't shown up. If I didn't have to spend the last several hours wasting my time in some doctor's office. But now it was late, and I was tired, so nothing would be resolved now. I looked at my brother.

"You can return to the hotel with us if you want." I practically did a backflip. Had my brother been so cool. I thought about it. Of course, he was; he knew how it was once you found your mate. He had discovered his a few years ago and hated being apart from her. She never went down south with him because they had children, and she couldn't bear to be apart from him. She always struggled because she missed Quill horribly when he was gone.

They had three pups, and she was pregnant with their fourth when we left. Did Cade want to have lots of pups? I shook the thoughts away. It was not time to think about that. I needed to focus on what people were saying.

My brother led me back to our truck; when I lifted my head, I asked. "Where is Cade?" "He went to go get his beta. He will meet us back at the hotel. I told him about the room and everything. But honestly, he didn't seem to want to share, so I doubt you will stay in the same room as me."

"Why are you being so cool?" "Hey, I am always cool. "Seriously" "I get it. You met your mate. I remember what that was like. But I will tell you this: no funny business if you share a room. Your ribs do need to heal a bit." I blushed. I did not have any desire to discuss things like this with Quill. Even if he was my best friend, some things are inappropriate to talk to your brother about. "I will drop it." He could tell I was embarrassed.

"Tomorrow, we will go over the particulars. I suggest linking our pack tomorrow and seeing what they want to do, seeing as this is a first. I knew he was talking about someone finding their mate outside the north. I had yet to learn what the precedent was. I didn't even know all the ways the Southerners were different from us yet. I mean, other than living in grand stone houses and dressing different. Oh, and their medicine. I sat in the truck as we drove; I wondered what would happen tomorrow.

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