

## Chapter 72

Elena

Grabbing a towel from the linen cupboard, I almost groan when I notice Axton coming up the hallway after me. Quickly shutting the door, I rush toward the stairs, trying to escape him. The shower is calling my name, just as I climb a few steps, I hear the boys cry out. Glancing over my shoulder, Axton stops mid-stride. He presses his lips in a line, giving me a look that says our little tiff is not over.

His hovering lately is driving me insane. Everywhere I turn, he's there! Breathing down my neck like he thinks I am about to have a nervous breakdown. I'm not, I'm just focused. Walking down the hall toward our room, I hear the boys fall quiet. Why son, why? Just cry for five more minutes, so I can shower in peace....

I know Axton is just worried about me, but it's not helping. I feel suffocated and frustrated, like my every move is being scrutinized. Taking a deep breath and reminding myself that he's only trying to help.

Stepping into the bedroom, I am flooded with light. I squint, moving around the spacious bedroom to the windows to close the curtains.

"What do you expect? You've been in that dark-ass room most of the day," Lexa snaps at me.

"It wasn't dark."

"You had a lamp on, which indicated to me that it was dark." Lexa argues.

"I had the blinds open," I retort, quickly shutting the windows on the next set and then the curtains. Although I am relieved she is talking to me, she has been quiet the last few days, leaving me in peace without her incessant whining.

"You know I can hear your thoughts, right? Incessant whining, your bitch ass whines more than me," she huffs, and I snicker then curse when I stub my little toe on the corner of the huge plush king-sized bed taking up the center of the damn room. A loud

gasping groan leaves my lips at the pain and my bent toenail as I hop on one foot, clutching my toe while trying to breathe through the pain.

"Serve you right, for thinking I'm annoying!" adds Lexa's annoying commentary while I hop on the other foot, a towel over my shoulder while clutching my toe.

"Oh, stop being a baby. You shift and break bones all the time," Lexa continues.

"That doesn't mean it doesn't hurt any less!" Lexa rolls her eyes at me. I suddenly want to kick the bed, but after what it did to my toe, I think it would win that one too so I think twice about punishing it. Regathering myself, I wiggle my toes and then head into the bathroom.

Moving to the double vanity, I set my towel aside and remove my earrings and necklace, placing them on the counter. I undress quickly, hanging my clothes on a hook on the wall near the bathtub that runs along the window. Once I'm done, I start the shower and step in, letting the scalding water cascade over my body.

His scent fills the steamy air and makes me groan as I hear the bathroom door creak open. See, I can't even shower in peace.

"Did you think you could escape me?" Axton chuckles. I turn around to face him. "I did once...." I remind him, not that I have any intention of escaping him again even if he has been extremely clingy lately.

As I turn around, his eyes run the entire length of me. He's leaning against the vanity, his eyes smoldering with intensity when they finally lift to mine with a devious smile on his lips. "As if you would ever escape me again," he growls, folding his arms across his chest.

"If I wanted to go, I'd go. You would never find me or catch me," I tell him, raising my eyebrows in challenge. He takes a step forward, his eyes flashing with amusement. "You're already caught," he purrs, and I can't help but shiver in response. "Oh, really?" I mock him with a playful smirk.

His eyes flash with amusement, and he pushes off the vanity. "Don't deny it," he says, his voice low and deep. I swallow hard, my heart racing. He reaches for the hem of his shirt, his eyes never leaving mine as he slowly peels it off. His muscular body is toned and sculpted, with firm and full pecs, defined abs, and strong arms that are covered in intricate tattoos. His biceps are also decorated with intricate designs, winding around his arms and ending at his wrists. I could admire this man all day and not get bored.

My cheeks flush as I take in his impressive physique. His broad shoulders, perfectly chiseled jawline, and toned chest send my pulse racing. He looks powerful, and every part of him screams Alpha.

"More like you'll be screaming Alpha," Lexa mutters as she drools over our mate like he is a piece of meat to be devoured.

My eyes follow his hands to his pants. In one quick motion, he unzips his jeans, letting them fall to the floor before stepping out of them. "I thought you were escaping?" he taunts as he grips the shower door handle.

I reach for it, but he rips it open, invading my shower. His eyes flicker as he steps in. Water cascades over his body, steam billowing and fogging the glass. He looks down at me, meeting my gaze, and I take a step back, my back pressing against the wall. He takes a step closer, and all I can do is watch, mesmerized, as he moves closer. "You won't ever escape me again," he purrs as he presses his hard chest against mine, his hand gripping my hip as he presses closer.

The mate bond goes berserk with need. While his hand trails over my hip and skates across my ribs when he suddenly cups my neck in his hand, his fingers grazing along his mark on my neck. I shiver, which makes him smile.

"Not with this," he murmurs.

He takes my hand in his and kisses my palm. "You're mine," he murmurs, and I can feel all of my resolve melting away. The steamy air wraps around us, and the electricity between makes my earlier anger fade to the back of my mind.

Yeah, I'm definitely caught, I think to myself when his lips crash down on mine. His hands are rough but gentle against my skin. His touch ignites a fire inside me, and my heart starts beating faster. All too soon, he pulls away, breaking the kiss.