

## Chapter 19: You're Not Just an Omega!

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ELIRA

I was pacing.

Back and forth, again and again, in front of the Disciplinary Office like the floor might open up if I stood still for too long.

Cassiel was inside.

Because of me.

It had already been over an hour since the dismissal. The hallways had grown eerily quiet, the sunlight dimming beyond the high windows, and still... no sign of him coming out.

My nails hovered close to my mouth again.

I didn't even realize what I was doing until Dianne's firm voice cut through the silence.

"Elira."

I stopped. Her arms were crossed, brows raised—calm, but with that edge of urgency she wore when worried.

"Don't bite your nails. You'll make them bleed again."

I let my hand drop.

"I'm sorry," I muttered, curling my fists to keep them in check. My eyes darted back to the closed door. "It's just—he's been in there for so long."

Dianne let out a sigh and stepped closer. "You need to breathe. This academy is strict, yes—but they know the difference between aggression and defense. What Cassiel did may have been excessive, but he was defending someone. That matters."

"But he's an alpha," I whispered. "And I heard... they're held to stricter rules. They have courses about controlling themselves. About not surrendering to emotions like anger unless ordered or justified."

"Protecting a friend from a bully justifies it, Elira. But if they don't see it that way, he might get a warning—or, at worst, a temporary suspension from class."

I clenched my fists tighter.

That boy who mocked me was inside, too. The one who laughed—who humiliated me in front of everyone. And he was fine. Aside from the bruises on his neck, probably.

But it's likely he'll just get a lecture.

Cassiel, though? He could face real consequences.

And he did that... for me.

If they punish him or take anything away from him, I'll go to the headmaster. I'll explain everything. I'll tell them Cassiel didn't mean to—

Stop.

A voice cut through my thoughts. Soft. Cold. Cruel.

You're a curse. Look at what's happening. You got close to someone, and now they suffer because of you. This is only the beginning. You should stay away from him! From them!

My breath caught.

That voice—was it mine?

Or something deeper?

I shut my eyes tight, trying to shake it off. But the guilt was still there, crawling through my chest like a sickness I couldn't name.

"Elira."

I flinched at Dianne's hand on my shoulder.

She looked at me—softer now like she understood more than I wanted her to.

"They won't punish him that badly," she said gently. "But... we have to go. If we're even a minute late, you know what will happen."

My stomach twisted.

Training.

Darius.

"He's probably already home," Dianne added quietly. "And if you're not there..."

The hairs on the back of my neck stood up.

That familiar chill crawled down my spine like a warning bell.

He's going to be mad.

Darius Vane didn't like disobedience.

It meant tonight's training would be brutal.

No water. No rest. No mercy.

He wouldn't kill me—of course not.

That would be too easy. But he'd push me until I collapsed, until my voice cracked from crying, or my stomach twisted from hunger.

And he'd watch.

He always watched.

I swallowed hard, glancing at the office door.

But as much as I feared going home, something in me clung to the door like it was the last lifeline.

I could endure Darius. I always have.

What I couldn't stand was walking away without knowing what happened to Cassiel.

Tomorrow was Saturday. We wouldn't have classes until Monday. That meant two days without a chance to see him—or hear anything.

I didn't even have a phone. Dianne had one, but she said it broke last month, and since she wasn't supposed to contact anyone anyway, she didn't bother replacing it.

If I left now, I'd know nothing. I'd carry that weight with me through the weekend. Worrying. Wondering.

I shifted my gaze to Dianne beside me.

"It's okay," I said, forcing a calmness I didn't feel. "But that won't be okay for you, Dianne. If we're late, he might include you in my punishment. You should go. Tell Darius I misbehaved—say I wandered or refused to leave—"

"No," she cut in, firm and unwavering. "That's nonsense, Elira. We'll wait together."

I blinked at her.

Dianne, who once felt like a stone statue standing beside me, was now

willing to risk facing him just to stay.

Something knotted in my chest.

Before I could respond, the door to the Disciplinary Office creaked open.

We both turned.

Cassiel stepped out.

His face was unreadable—expression carefully blank, like someone who'd just been through interrogation and wasn't sure if it was truly over.

But then his eyes landed on us.

On me.

And his mask cracked just a little.

Surprise flickered behind his gaze—followed by something I couldn't name. Not relief, not exactly... but something close to it.

"You're still here?" he asked, his voice rougher than usual.

But before I could respond, he suddenly grabbed my wrist and pulled me away from the place, like he was in a hurry. He walked so fast that Dianne almost ran to keep up with us. His grip tightened the closer we got to the exit.

I winced from the pain—my wrist was already bruised.

"Why did you even wait there? That bastard was also there—"

I must've let out a small groan because Cassiel immediately let go of my hand and stopped walking. His expression darkened as his eyes dropped to my wrist, then down to my hands.

"Who did that to you?"

I shook my head, quickly tucking my hand behind my back. "Just some t-training. Are you alright?"

"You're the one who's hurt and you're asking me that?"

I bit my lips. "Cassiel, you were in the disciplinary office because of me. What did they do to you?"

"Just answer her question, Cassiel. We really need to go home," Dianne added, panting slightly as she caught up beside me.

Cassiel sighed. "It's nothing big. A warning..."

He paused, looking between us before continuing, "And a suspension from class until next week."

I exhaled a shaky breath and looked away, shaking my head. "That shouldn't have happened... I'll talk to the headmaster—"

"Don't bother. It's fine with me, Elira."

How could he be fine with that?

"And what about the other guy?" Dianne asked.

Cassiel gave a lazy shrug, though his voice had a sharp edge. "He got a note in his file. Nothing serious. Of course." He walked again, and we followed him.

"I'm sorry, Cassiel," I murmured, my voice small as we stepped outside the building.

The wind was cold, but not colder than the shame crawling up my spine.

"I really am... If you hadn't stepped in, none of this would've happened."

"Why are you saying sorry?" he asked, cutting me off. "You shouldn't be."

"I should," I said quietly. "You don't deserve to be punished for someone like me."

Cassiel stopped from walking to his car and looked at me.

His eyes sharpened, his jaw clenched. "Someone like you?" he echoed, disbelief thick in his voice.

I opened my mouth to explain, but it was too late.

He was...mad.

"What? An omega?!" he snapped, his voice rising, raw and angry.

I flinched from the sudden loudness, instinctively stepping back.

Dianne shifted beside me, tense but quiet.

"You're not just an omega!" he continued, his hands curled into fists at his sides. "Not being born an Alpha or a Luna doesn't mean you're beneath them! It doesn't mean they get to hurt you or mock you or treat you like trash!"

His breathing grew uneven.

"No one should do that to you—or to any omega," he said, voice breaking slightly near the end.

The words struck me like a gust of wind, stronger than they should have.

But what hit deeper wasn't just what he said... it was how he said it.

Like it wasn't just for me.

Like he was saying it to someone else. For someone else.

There was something in his eyes—a flicker of pain that didn't belong to me.

He turned his back on us, dragging a hand down his face with a long, hard sigh.

It was like he was trying to pull himself back together.

"You should go home, Elira," he said after a beat. His voice was quieter now, rough around the edges. "And don't you dare talk to the headmaster about the sanction. I mean it."

I didn't respond.

Because honestly, I couldn't.

In the end, I just watched Cassiel march his way to his car.

"He's mad..."

Dianne tapped my shoulder. "Not at you... but at the world we live in—and for the omega he couldn't protect in the end."

"What?" I asked, blinking at her.

Dianne shook her head. "We need to go home, Elira. Let's go," she said, offering no further explanation.

An omega Cassiel failed to protect?

Finally, a rest.



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