

Chapter 28: First Heat

Chapter 28: First Heat

It was dark and hot. I was trembling.

My throat was dry. My limbs were heavy. I couldn't lift them. I couldn't speak.

My body burned like fire, yet I was shaking chilled to the bone.

And then—

Voices.

Far away at first, like echoes in a tunnel.

"She's burning up. Her skin's soaked...look at her. What happened?"

That voice... Queen Selene.

"Where is Darius?" Her tone sharpened, worried. "What did he do to her?"

"I don't know," A calmer, lower voice. "He hasn't returned. He left her at the mall. I got a call, he just told me to pick her up in his car."

Sorin?

"She was like this when I found her. Sweating and unconscious."

"She's reacting to something," Queen Selene said. "Her scent, Sorin, it's changed."

"I noticed."

A pause.

"I think it's... the heat."

I tried to move. I tried to speak.

But I couldn't.

My lips wouldn't part. My limbs refused to obey.

I was trapped inside my own body—flushed with unbearable heat, trembling all over.

"She needs to be stabilized," the Queen said, calmer now but firm. "Call Damon. Don't let Darius near her if he returns like this. If she's like this... it's possible Darius—"

Their voices hushed.

Suddenly, nothing. Silence again.

Everything blurred like my mind was slipping underwater.

I floated in it—weightless and afraid.

And in the dark, I heard something else.

A whisper. Rough. Familiar.

"You shouldn't have touched me like that."

Darius?

The heat surged again, and I let out a choked cry—half in pain, half in memory.

The dark swallowed me whole.

"Run, Elira!"

My mother's frantic voice rang out.

A dream.

No, it is a memory twisted into a nightmare.

I was here again.

The forest was darker this time. The trees are taller. The shadows are deeper.

My legs were small and weak. I couldn't keep up.

I stumbled through the underbrush as thunder cracked overhead.

My brother's hand slipped from mine.

"Elira, don't stop!" he yelled behind me, but the storm swallowed his voice.

I turned too late.

Figures in cloaks surged from the mist.

Cold laughter. Red eyes. Grabbing hands.

"No!" I cried, but my voice came out choked and small.

"Stay behind me!" my brother shouted, stepping in front of me.

My mother appeared a moment later, shielding us both, her arms spread wide.

They were trying to protect me again.

But something changed.

This part of the dream was new.

Because just as the figures closed in—

A hand caught mine.

Strong. Warm. Commanding.

I looked up, gasping.

It wasn't my brother.

It wasn't my mother.

It was him.

Darius.

He was younger. His eyes were darker in this dream, stormy, not golden.

His grip tightened around mine.

"Don't look back," he said.

Then he ran, pulling me with him through the thorns and shadows.

My breath caught as branches slapped against my skin. But I didn't let go.

He was faster. I didn't know where we were going, but I followed him.

Something about his hand in mine made the darkness... hesitate.

Like it feared him.

I stumbled, but he caught me.

Then he stopped.

Turned.

Looked down at me.

He said something, but I couldn't hear it all, just fragments.

"...you keep coming back to me."

And suddenly—

His hand slipped from mine.

And I fell into the dark.

*

I woke up.

The first thing I noticed was the stillness.

No fire burning beneath my skin. No shaking. No darkness swallowing me whole.

Just... stillness.

My body ached, heavy and sore, but the unbearable heat disappeared.

I blinked slowly, taking in the soft, dim lighting and familiar furnishings around me.

This was my room.

The soft sheets smelled faintly of lavender. A cool cloth rested on my forehead, already warm from the heat it had tried to ease.

I tried to sit up, but something tugged at my hand.

I turned my head and froze.

There was a needle pierced into the back of my hand, taped down neatly, connected to a tube. A small bag of clear fluid hung beside the bed, swaying gently.

"It's an IV," a calm voice said from across the room.

I turned and found a man sitting in the armchair near the window, flipping through something on a clipboard.

He stood as he spoke, tall and broad, wearing a casual white shirt under a medical coat.

His ash-blond hair was swept back neatly, his jawline sharp and lightly stubbled. His skin was pale and smooth, his gray eyes steady and intelligent, but they also had a certain warmth.

He was handsome. Gorgeous, even.

And unfamiliar.

"I'm Damon," he said with a slight smile. "The pack's doctor. You gave everyone quite the scare."

My lips parted, but my throat was dry. "W-What happened...?"

He crossed the room and handed me a glass of water with a straw. "Sip slowly."

I obeyed, the cool water soothing the ache in my throat.

"You were unconscious for three days," he continued, voice gentle. "Burning up. Shaking. You were completely out of it."

Three days?

My eyebrows drew together. I tried to reach back into my memory.

But...

The last thing I remembered—

"I was in the elevator," I said slowly. "With... Darius."

Then nothing.

Just black.

My hands trembled slightly as I pulled the cup away from my lips. "After that... I don't remember anything. What happened to me?"

Damon's smile faded into something more serious.

"You experienced the onset of heat," he said gently. "Unstable, early stage. Your body wasn't ready. No suppressants. No regulation. It overwhelmed your system."

My chest tightened. "But I... I didn't feel anything before. No signs."

He nodded. "That's common in rare omega cases. Sometimes trauma or stress accelerates the symptoms. Something triggered it. Emotion, maybe. Or contact."

I didn't say anything.

I didn't dare say his name.

Damon sat at the edge of the bed, resting his clipboard beside him.

"I've treated many cases like this. The good news is you stabilized with medication and fluids. You're safe now. But it will happen again unless we manage it."

He reached into a small case and opened it, revealing two boxes of medicine.

"These are for you," he explained. "The first is a scent suppressant. It'll mask your natural omega signature so you don't attract unwanted attention."

My stomach twisted.

"And this one," he held up the other box, "is for your cycle. A heat suppressant. It won't stop it forever, but it'll keep it under control. You'll need to take both. Every day. Same time."

I stared at the boxes in his hand.

"If you forget even once," Damon said carefully, "your body could react again. And next time... it might be worse. Especially if you're around someone who could trigger it."

My pulse fluttered.

I nodded faintly, my mind spinning.

I looked down at my hand again, the IV taped to my skin.

The last thing I remembered was him.

Darius.

And nothing after.

Why can't I remember?

Damon's voice broke through my swirling thoughts.

"Elira," he said gently, calling my attention. "There's something else you should know before you start taking the suppressants."

I looked up at him, my fingers curling around the edge of the blanket.

"These medications are necessary," he continued, reaching for the small glass bottle and box again, "but they're not perfect. Your body is new to this, naturally sensitive."

He opened the box, pulled out one of the capsules, and showed it to me.

"You'll likely experience some side effects," he said. "The most common ones are fatigue, dizziness, nausea—especially in the first few days."

I nodded slowly, trying to keep track.

"But there's more," he added, tone dipping into something more cautious.

"Because of how strong these are, you might feel emotionally off. Irritable. Overwhelmed. Some patients even feel disconnected from themselves for a while. It's temporary though."

I swallowed.

Disconnected?

"You might also notice mood swings. Sudden changes in energy, or even... cravings."

"Cravings?" I echoed.

Damon offered a short, sympathetic smile. "Not just food. Sometimes touch. Sometimes scent. The body's still trying to balance itself, especially during suppression."

I felt my face grow warm.

"Will it hurt?" I asked quietly.

"No," he answered, shaking his head. "Not physically. But it's important to take care of yourself during this adjustment. Eat well. Rest. And don't skip a dose—not even once."

He handed me a small pill case, already labeled with days and times.

"I've scheduled it for you. Morning and night. If you feel anything too unusual, or if the symptoms become unbearable, you call me. I'll be monitoring you closely the next few weeks."

I took the pill case carefully.

"Thank you," I whispered.

"You're welcome—" Damon started but stopped abruptly.

The door creaked open.

Both of us turned.

Dianne stood in the doorway, holding a tray of food with both hands. Her posture was careful, but her shoulders were stiff with something unspoken.

She didn't look at Damon. Not even once.

Damon, on the other hand, did.

His eyes lingered on her for a moment too long. Something unreadable flickered in his gaze, but he said nothing.

"Thank God you're awake," Dianne said, her voice a little too quick as she stepped inside, completely bypassing Damon.

She smiled gently at me, walking to the bed.

"I'm worried." She placed the tray down with practiced care, adjusting the napkin and silverware like it gave her something to focus on.

I sat up slowly, my eyes flicking between the two of them.

Damon stepped back, sliding his hands into his coat pockets. His expression was unreadable now.

"I'll come back later to check on you, Elira."

Still, Dianne didn't look at him.

And he didn't wait for her to.

The door clicked softly behind him as he left.

Dianne exhaled and turned to me, brushing a strand of hair from my cheek. "You scared us," she said softly.

I offered her a faint smile. "I'm fine now. Thank you... for taking care of me."

"You don't have to thank me for that," she replied. "Anyway, you should eat. Queen Selene only agreed to leave for her trip after she was convinced you were recovering. By the time she comes back, you should be strong again. She's really worried about you."

I nodded, something warm blooming in my chest. It's so different from how I was treated every time I got sick in my previous pack.

Now, someone cares for me.

She placed the tray carefully in front of me. I looked down at it.

Soup, bread, sliced fruit. My stomach growled faintly, but something else gnawed at me more urgently.

"Dianne..." I said softly.

She paused her hand halfway to unfolding the napkin.

"Damon already explained what happened to my body..." I began. "But I need to ask something else."

Her eyes met mine slowly, cautiously.

"What happened at the mall?" I swallowed hard. "I remember... the elevator. I remember Darius. But after that, it's all just black. Like my mind won't let me remember."

Dianne's lips parted, but she hesitated. Her fingers fidgeted with the

edge of the tray.

"I... I don't know everything," she said carefully. "But Sorin said Darius called him. Told him to pick you up. You were already unconscious when he found you, slumped in the backseat of the car."

"He... left me there?"

She nodded. "Yes. And he hasn't come back. The Queen's furious. Not just because he left you—but because he still chose to go on a trip, even after everything. Even if it was work."

She shook her head, her voice gentle again. "Eat, Elira. You need your strength back."

My lips parted, but I didn't know what to say. The memory of Darius's hands on either side of me... the elevator stopping... the sound of his voice—

"I don't remember anything after the elevator," I said again, more to myself than to her.

Dianne pressed her lips together. Her voice was quiet when she spoke again.

"Maybe that's a good thing."

"A... good thing?" I echoed, my voice barely above a whisper.

Dianne looked at me, her expression softening. She nodded once.

"Yes," she said gently. "Maybe it's a bad memory you don't have to carry. One you're better off without."



Send Gifts



9 Likes