

CHAPTER 48

Kai POV

It's the next day, and although I know I shouldn't, I find myself heading towards the pack hospital anyway. At least Candice isn't hanging around, wondering where I'm going. She's too busy going out and shopping. My wolf points that out rather sourly, but I ignore him. At least it keeps Candice away for a while. I really shouldn't feel like that, considering she's my girlfriend, but I can't help noticing I'm feeling that more and more these days. Was it because I'd found my mate, or was I getting tired of her? My wolf has made his opinion on numerous occasions, but why am I starting to agree with him? Why am I suddenly finding myself disliking Candice so much? What has changed?

I walked through the front entrance confidently, seeking out Dr. James. I want to find out how Winter is going and whether there's a change in her condition. My mind flashes back to our kiss and I cringe. That was wrong of me and I would have to apologize. I don't want Winter to get the wrong idea.

I was a little mystified when I was told by the head nurse at the nurse's station that Dr. James is currently locked up in Winter's room. He'd failed to mention that last night when he informed me of what was going on. I feel a spurt of rage. What is he doing in there, alone with my mate? My wolf is in agreement, growling lowly in my head. I almost stomped down to Winter's room and peered inside to see Dr. James slept rather uncomfortably in a chair, beside Winter's bedside. Well, at least he's not in her bed, not that I think my mate is capable of anything like that, even with what I'd done to her.

I knock softly on the door, seeing Winter is still sleeping peacefully, her hair spread out on the pillows and neatly tucked underneath a blanket. His eyes open and he sits upright looking startled, before turning his head around and viewing me guiltily. I watch as Dr. James gingerly gets to his feet and tiptoes to the doors, unlocking them and quietly coming out into the hallway, where I'm waiting impatiently for him.

"I need to speak to you, rather urgently, Alpha Kai", he tells me and he sounds grim like there's something serious he needs to tell me. I made a motion for him to walk with me but he shook his head.

"I cannot leave Winter alone in her room," the Dr says reluctantly, and my eyebrows rise in surprise, even as I begin to feel a tiny bit suspicious. I should have paid better attention to what he tried to tell me last night.

"Then give me a moment to mind-link Beta Langdon. He can come down and keep an eye on her", I said firmly, and did that, Langdon assuring me that he'd be a moment. The doctor looks grateful.

"Thank you, Alpha Kai", he breathes " there's a good reason for needing someone outside of Winter's hospital room and I don't want to disturb her either while she's asleep", he adds. I'm in agreement. Part of me is happy she's asleep, it means prolonging the apology that I felt I owed her.

We waited, I was impatient, until Langdon finally turned up, looking breathless, as though he'd run straight to the hospital. I eye the sweat on his clothes and surmised that he probably had run.

"Yes, Alpha Kai," he said, and I turned to him.

"Beta Langdon," I said quietly, keeping my voice low, "I need you to keep an eye on Winter and don't let anyone besides yourself into her room. Is that understood?"

Dr. James speaks "that means no nurses, doctors, or anybody. Nobody should be stepping foot in her room at all."

Langdon looks bewildered but nods. "Of course, I'll keep a close eye on her, until your return", he tells me, and stations himself against the wall, his arms folded and a serious expression on his face. Thank God I had someone I could trust to have my back. Even with something as small as this.

"This way" Dr. James whispers and leads me to his office, closing the door securely behind him and motioning for me to take a seat.

"Winter is healing remarkably well" he started off as I listened intently, glad to hear it. "Her wounds are beginning to close and she's not in any pain right now. I don't know if you are aware, but she felt the pain of you being with someone else yesterday" he says, fixating his eyes on me. I feel a little indignant. How dare he scold me like that? I'm the Alpha, but another part of me acknowledges the truth of his words and I feel ashamed of myself. I wriggle uncomfortably in the chair. I feel like a child in the headmaster's office. "There's something else as well. Her body is covered in scars, Alpha Kai, old ones that were clearly made with silver."

"I didn't torture her," I said dumbly, and he looked at me exasperated.

"I'm aware," he says with a groan, "but somebody has. It's been going on for years."

I'm quietly taking that in, feeling anger rise inside of me, even though I know I can't do anything for her, nothing can heal wounds made by Silver. Well, scratch that, the wounds would heal but the scars would remain.

Dr. James takes a deep breath and looks at me apprehensively. I know he's been holding something back. We wouldn't have had to go to his office if all he wanted to tell me, was to inform me about Winter's current condition.

"There was an incident last night," he tells me grimly. "Someone entered Winter's hospital room and increased her morphine dosage. It was put

incredibly high. If she hadn't managed to rip her iv out, it could very well have been fatal."

I exploded. He'd failed to mention the part about the morphine, instead stating that Winter had been involved in an incident and that he was taking care of her. I should have asked questions, I thought to myself grimly. But then, the doctor probably assumed I didn't care much for Winter. Even though a small part of me does care for her.

"Your nurses must be incompetent" I, raged, standing up and pacing back and forth. " They put my mate's life in danger. How could they have made such a stupid mistake?" I'm incredulous at the thought of such a huge mistake taking place under Dr. James's supervision.

He holds up a hand to stop me. "That's the thing, all of the nurses deny that they entered the room and messed with the dosage. All of them have been working for me for years and I believe them. None of them know that she's your mate, Alpha Kai. I've not disclosed that information to anyone."

My eyes narrow as I realize what he's implying. "You think she was targeted because she's, my mate?" I ask angrily and he nods.

"I'm positive. The thing is, how many people know about her?"

I stop and think. Langdon, of course, knows, but so do several of the patrols that were on the night that Winter stumbled onto my territory. They wouldn't know we were mates but I had been acting differently in her presence. Had someone maybe picked up on it? Overheard something they shouldn't have? Or was it just a lucky guess?

I cursed and threw my hands up in the air. I feel a sense of frustration and concern. Winter wasn't safe in the hospital. Now, what was I going to do? My wolf wanted to take her home with us, but it could have been anyone and there was no guarantee of her safety there, not to mention I didn't want Candice to find out about her, not yet anyway. That was a discussion to

have with her another time, once I'd made up my mind about what I wanted to do.

"What do you suggest?" I asked the dr evenly as he thought about it.

"I'm prepared to discharge her, but she still needs to rest. Is there someone you trust completely with Winter's care? Someone who can guard her and keep her safe from harm?"

Oh, I have someone alright, but I doubt he's going to be pleased with the plan that's whirling around in my mind. My wolf is annoyed that we aren't taking care of her and sulks. I ignore him.

"It's safe to discharge her?" I confirmed and Dr. James nodded adamantly.

"So long as she rests, she'll be fine. I've got painkillers I can give her but I think she'll probably manage without them."

"I take it you locked yourself in the room then to keep Winter safe" I commented dryly and he blushed and looked at the ground.

"Forgive me, Alpha Kai" he stammers. "I didn't know what else to do. Her safety was my number one priority."

I waved his apology away. In the grand scheme of things, I didn't blame him. He'd taken care of my mate and kept her safe, going well above and beyond his job. I was grateful to him, more than anything.

" Thank you for taking care of her, Dr. James. You have my thanks" I told him, standing up and walking to the door, "arrange for Winter's discharge and I'll organize the rest", I added grimly, walking back towards the hospital room and wondering if Winter had woken up yet. I knew instantly she wasn't going to like what I had in store for her, but there was no other choice, so she'd have to suck it up and deal with it. So would a certain someone else. I gave a wicked grin; this was going to be very interesting.