

## CHAPTER 76

### Winter POV

I wake up and am slightly disappointed to find that Kai has already left and gone down to the summit. But he'd been considerate enough to leave a note so that I didn't feel abandoned and he apparently had wanted me to have a bit of a sleep-in. I couldn't really fault him for that. So I slowly climb out of bed and head to the bathroom, wincing slightly at the pain and stinging between my legs. A bath is definitely in order. I smile, though, remembering last night and what happened between the both of us. It's definitely a memory that I'm going to cherish. For my first time, it was absolutely perfect. Everything about it was just magical.

I take my time, luxuriating in the bubble bath, closing my eyes as the pain starts to fade again. I can't get the memory of last night out of my mind. Kai had been so gentle and so loving and my first time had been more incredible than even I had imagined. He was truly a changed man and my heart was full, so full of love for this man who was showing me just what love really felt like. I've never felt like this towards anyone before, not even my brother. This love, this adoration, it's all completely new to me, and if I'm honest, it's frightening as all hell. I'm in love and I can't imagine my life without this man in it. How's that for being obsessed with him? I don't even know if he feels the same way. I know he loves me, but just how much? Enough that he can't live without me either? I hope so. I know he's protective of me and I know his wolf, Storm, loves me and Sabriel. To be fair, I love his wolf as well. I found Storm to be the perfect compliment to Kai's personality.

I hum under my breath as I wrap a towel around myself and head into the bedroom. I look at all my clothes with a critical eye. I don't particularly like dresses, but I'm willing to dress up a little, maybe turn Kai's head. If anything, it will show just how much I appreciate the man, won't it? Besides, he likes it when I dress up. I see the way his eyes light up when he sees me. Then I frowned. He lights up no matter what I wear. So I guess it's really entirely up to me what I want to wear today. Something that's nice, I decide, without being overkill. I want to at least be able to walk around and maybe even dance with Kai again.

I dressed in another skirt and dressy blouse, my leather jacket of course on top. I love this leather jacket. There's nothing it doesn't go with. I finish up with a pair of dressy heels, ones that are short enough I won't embarrass myself by tripping over them. Wouldn't that be something for everyone to see? I definitely cringe at the thought of humiliating myself in front of such a large crowd of both Alphas and Luna's. Not to mention Kai. I shudder.

I headed down to the elevator. It seems lazy, but the last thing I want to do is go down a bunch of stairs, especially considering we're on the top floor. Plus, there's the whole heels thing. It would be dangerous, I thought to myself, to take the stairs in these beautiful shoes. The elevator is empty, except for one person, a young girl who's right in the back corner, keeping to herself. She's wearing a hoodie so I can't fully see her face and sweatpants. She mustn't be part of the summit then, but she sure as hell smells like a shifter to me. I shrug. It's none of my business. I'm not about to judge her by what she's wearing, even if it does surprise me somewhat. Maybe she's an omega that was brought here to help serve the guests? But then wouldn't she be wearing a uniform?

"Good morning", I greet her cheerfully as I step inside, but she stares at me rather coldly and stays silent.

Geez, what's up her butt, I thought to myself, slightly disgruntled now, as I pressed the button for the ground floor. I was only trying to be friendly for heaven's sake. I guess not everyone is in a good mood today.

The elevator gives a lurch and I grip the railing. Man, I hate these things. I hate small spaces in general, to be fair, anything that seems like a confined space. Always have. The woman remains quiet and I dismiss her, staring ahead when she suddenly moves. Even then, I foolishly just look ahead, assuming she's making her way to the door for when it opens. There's nothing about her that screams danger and that proves to be my downfall.

Instead, I feel something pierce the flesh in my shoulder and I cry out, my skin bubbling and burning. The woman reaches over and presses the emergency stop button as she pulls the silver dagger out and I hiss, my eyes wide. This is a trap. This is an ambush, but why me? This doesn't make any sense. I've never seen this woman before in my life. Which can only mean that someone was paying her to do this to me. I bet it's that fucking Candice. My hands clench into fists even though I'm extremely unsteady on my feet. Damn the silver. It's so potent and dangerous for werewolves.

"Why are you doing this?" I wheeze but the woman says nothing. Her eyes just narrow as she stares at me calmly.

I can't shift, I realize, when I frantically try. In fact, I can't even hear Sabriel. There's something dripping from the end of the dagger and the woman gives me a cold smile. "Wolfsbane", I breathe out in disgust "you laced the dagger with wolfsbane."

No wonder I can't hear Sabriel or mind-link, I realize, which means that I can't mind-link Kai for help. I'm on my own.

The woman lunges towards me and I sidestep just in time, wrestling with her for the knife. She kicks me in my midsection and I double over,

screaming as the dagger is stabbed in my side and pulled back out. God, it hurts, the pain is excruciating and it's spreading throughout my entire body. Not only that, but blood is welling up from my wounds and dripping onto the floor. I'm not going down without a fight though. I won't give her the satisfaction of watching me give up. Besides, I have a hell of a lot to live for, including Kai. This bitch is going to have to work at it.

The next time she rushes me, I slam my fist against her face, hard, hitting her directly on the nose as she howls. Take that, you bitch, I think, with a scowl. I kick her while she's clutching her face, but she doesn't let go of the dagger and drags it down my leg as she falls. Fuck. God that hurts like a bitch.

I fall to the ground, clutching my leg, watching as she gets back up. There was nothing but coldness in her eyes and determination etched on her face. I feel helpless but I stand, putting my weight on the other foot. All I can think about is Kai. I don't want to die, especially not when my mate is finally showing me just how much he loves me. I'm not ready to leave this world just yet and I'll be damned if I let this woman get the best of me. I don't even know why she's attacking, but some part of me knows instinctively that someone's put her up to it. Someone whose name is probably Candice. Not that I have time to accuse the woman of that, she's moving around so bloody fast.

She raises her arm and goes to stab me. I grabbed her arm in midair and twisted it, causing her to yelp as I thrust my head forward and heard a sickening crack. This time her nose has well and truly been broken, I see, with a huge sense of satisfaction. The knife has fallen to the ground and I limp over, bending down to pick it up, wrinkling my nose at the heavy smell of the wolfsbane it appears to be coated in. This woman wasn't taking any chances, was she? The smell is disgusting and fills the air of the elevator.

The woman's eyes are wide in horror as she gets to her feet. "Who sent you" I demanded, even as my voice is hoarse from my yells and my vision was becoming somewhat blurry. I need to know who set this up. I'm tired of my life being in danger all the time, tired of always having to look over my shoulder in fear. This ends today.

The woman shakes her head. "I can't tell you," she says in a gravelly voice, "they'll kill me."

They? It was more than one person who wanted me dead? Are you freaking kidding me? So much for thinking it was just Candice. Who else have I managed to piss off?

"You're coming with me" I growled, shaking my head as spots appeared in my vision. "You can tell security everything" I, snarled.

I press the buttons for the ground floor, but as the elevator lurches again she darts towards me, kicking the dagger out of my hand, sending me flying to the floor as the elevator continues to move.

I watch, trying to scramble to my feet, hands slipping and sliding as I realize the entire elevator is covered in blood splatters and trails, blood that belongs to me. There's a look of hesitation on her face before she plunges the dagger into me once more, my hand swinging out wildly as she pulls back.

"It has to be enough" the woman mutters in a low voice, so quiet, I almost miss it. "There's so much wolfsbane in her system that it's impossible for her to survive this" she breathes. Is she talking to herself?

"Fuck you" I wheezed. I keep swinging out wildly, my legs kicking, but she's too far away to reach now and I'm not entirely sure

I have the strength to stand back up right now.

I'm frantically looking towards the doors, the woman hiding in the corner now. Maybe someone will be on the other side, someone who will be able to help me. It's all I can hope for. The elevator doors open with a loud ping and I lower my head in resignation. There's no one there. The woman looks triumphant, edging out of the elevator. I hear her footsteps racing away as she makes a run for it.

"Help" I rasp out, "somebody help me."

Kai, I think woozily, Kai, I need you to come and find me. I cough up blood and lie completely down, feeling extremely weak, spots dancing in my vision which is fast becoming blurry. I'm a goner. There's no way I'm going to survive this. It would be a miracle. My one regret is that Kai didn't know where I was or that I was coming downstairs. I should have mind-linked him. That would have been the smart thing to do. But then, I hadn't exactly anticipated being attacked at a summit by werewolves for goodness' sake. This should have been one of the safest places to be. I had thought I was safe here. The irony.

My head lowers to the ground. I'm cold now, so unbearably cold. My eyes are beginning to flutter shut of their own accord. I don't have the strength to hold on for much longer. The last thing I hear as my eyes close and darkness surrounds me is the sound of a woman hysterically screaming. I wonder if I just got my miracle.