

~CARTER~

"That's the mansion!" Clara gasps. "Right where they said it would be."

She was right; I could spot it clearly from where we were. It was so huge that it wasn't difficult to spot at all.

I mash down on the accelerator as far as it could go. I didn't stop until I was just a short distance away from it.

Clara grabs my arm when I reach for the door, "what are you doing?" She asks.

"Didn't we agree that the second we got here, we would barge into their residence and bring Scarlett back home?" I demand.

She swallows, "I thought that you were joking about that. Carter, if you just barge into their home, you'll get yourself killed. It's just me and you. Everyone else is back home. Scarlett loves you. If you get yourself killed, your baby will be without a father, and your wife will spend the rest of her life grieving for you."

"Clara," I whisper. "I know you are right, but right now, I can only think about getting Scarlett back. I'm not scared of dying; I'm scared of losing Scarlett to her real mate."

Her eyes soften, and she squeezes my arm gently, "I've never seen Scarlett look at another man like she looks at you. My sister wouldn't have chosen to marry you if she wasn't deeply in love. She still wanted to be with you even after knowing I was crazy about you in the past; she wouldn't do that for just anybody."

"Are you sure?" I ask her as my voice breaks a little. I can hardly recognize it. I didn't realize until now that a part of me was terrified of leaving this truck. I was terrified that I would enter that house and find Scarlett in the arms of another man.

I wouldn't know how to react to something like that.

My entire life would shatter if she ever chose him over me.

I knew Scarlett loved me. I knew that I meant plenty to her. However, I also knew what the mate bond could do to you. I've seen relationships fall apart when one person found their true mate. I've seen broken hearts all over the academy and at parties we've hosted.

"I've never been more sure of anything else," Clara answers me. "I wouldn't have let Scarlett marry you if I wasn't sure it was what she wanted. My sister was never interested in anyone else until she fell for you. No mate bond could take that away from her. She loves you with her entire heart; there isn't any space in her heart for another man, Carter. I'm sure she's waiting for you. And if she isn't waiting, it's because she's trying to escape."

Hearing Clara say this made the pain in my heart ease a little.

"I think it's time to get my wife back," I tell her.

She nods.

"But I want you to stay in the truck," I add before she has a chance to open the door.

Her eyes widen, "what the hell are you talking about? I'm not leaving you to go in there on your own."

"Scarlett will never forgive me if you get hurt inside there." I try to explain. "Please let me do this. Besides, if we both get trapped there, no one can call for help."

She presses her lips tightly together and glares at me, "You knew you were going to do this the second you allowed me to come, didn't you?"

I shrug my shoulders, "I had to find an excuse to get you to stay back. I've hurt you plenty in the past, Clara. I don't want to be the reason that you get physically hurt this time. If I don't come out in fifteen minutes, that's your cue to call for help."

She sighs, "I can't believe you're convincing me to do this, but just be safe, Carter. It feels weird to say this since we dated in the past, but now that you are married to my sister, you're like a brother to me. I don't want anything bad to happen to either one of you. So please, even though I want you to get Scarlett back, be safe while doing it. Do not do anything too risky. If you sense any danger, get out of there immediately."

I nod, "don't worry. I'll be back soon."

I'm surprised to see tears in her eyes. I didn't think that Clara would still care so much for me after everything that I did to her in the past.

I jump out of the truck and slowly advance to the mansion before me.

There was a thick wall in front of me, but it wouldn't be difficult to climb it. There was no point in using the front gate. They wouldn't let me in without adequately explaining why I was there. I was sure that Wilder already warned his guards about me.

I walk towards the back of the property; there should be fewer guards to get through from here.

I was insane for even attempting to get into the Cage's residence with no plan or backup. However, I've been doing crazy things since I fell in love with Scarlett. This was just an addition to the list.

"Time to get my girl back," I growled under my breath as I climbed up the wall. I scanned the area when I reached the top, and no guard was in sight.

What the f\*\*k?

This had to be some trap. Why would there be no guards stationed here?

I jump down from the wall and look for the first back entrance I could find for the house.

When I spot it, I rush over to the door.

I couldn't waste any time. If I stopped to think, I would get caught quickly, and I couldn't let that happen.

I had to find Scarlett before any of that could happen.

When I opened the door, I was shocked when someone barreled straight into me.

I get one sniff of her scent, and every part of my body freezes.