

Untouchable: The Alpha's Miracle Doctor

Chapter 7

Haven Kramer POV:

The harsh liquor hit the open, rotting flesh with a soft sizzle. Phoebe squeezed her eyes shut, a pained whimper escaping her lips.

I watched, my face impassive. The alcohol washed away the surface layer of pus and grime, revealing the blackened, dead tissue underneath.

My brow furrowed. Debridement. All this necrotic tissue had to be cut away, or the infection would continue to rage unchecked.

I needed a scalpel. And I didn't have one.

"Phoebe," I said. "Find me the sharpest, smallest knife in this house. And a candle."

Confused but obedient, she hurried out. She returned minutes later with a small paring knife, likely from the kitchens, and a tallow candle.

I lit the candle, the small flame pushing back against the room's gloom. I held the blade of the knife in the fire, watching it glow a dull red, then a brighter orange. A primitive but effective sterilization.

While I waited for the blade to cool, I systematically doused every one of Demetri's wounds with the liquor. The sharp, alcoholic sting filled the air, a clean smell warring with the stench of decay. By the time I was done, five bottles were empty.

Phoebe watched from the corner, her face pale, looking as if she might faint.

I took the cooled knife. My hand was as steady as a rock. I took a deep breath, leaned over Demetri, and made the first cut.

I worked with the intense focus I had honed over thousands of hours in the operating room. My movements were precise, economical. I excised only the dead, black tissue, preserving every millimeter of viable flesh. Phoebe watched, her initial horror turning to stunned silence.

The work was painstaking. It took nearly two hours. When I finally cut away the last piece of necrotic tissue, my forehead was beaded with sweat and my back ached fiercely.

I used the cleanest strips of linen to bandage each wound. When the last one was tied, I straightened up, a wave of exhaustion washing over me.

Only then did I realize I was starving. I hadn't eaten since the day before.

As if on cue, a loud gurgle echoed in the quiet room. It came from Phoebe.

Her face turned bright red, and she looked down at the floor in mortification.

I looked at her, at her frightened eyes and flushed cheeks, and a genuine smile broke through my exhaustion. It was the first time I had truly smiled since arriving in this world.

The smile seemed to startle her. She looked up, her mouth slightly agape.

"I'm hungry too," I said.

Her expression cleared, and her eyes lit up as if she'd just remembered a wonderful secret. She scurried to the small bundle of her belongings near the door. From it, she produced two oil-paper packages.

She carefully unwrapped one. Inside were two golden-brown, still-warm sweet pastries.

"The cook slipped them to me," she whispered, holding one out to me like a precious offering. "Please, miss. You have to eat."

I took the pastry. The smell of butter and caramelized sugar was heavenly.

I took a bite. The flaky crust shattered, and the warm, sweet filling melted on my tongue. In this cold, desperate place, the simple comfort of it was overwhelming.

My eyes stung. I wasn't just Haven Kramer, the wolfless girl. I wasn't just the surgeon. For a moment, I was just a hungry, tired woman being cared for by a kind friend.

I knew then that Phoebe was the one person I could trust.

We sat on the floor by the bed, in the flickering candlelight, and ate our pastries in a comfortable silence.

I looked at Demetri. With his wounds cleaned and bandaged, his breathing seemed a little less shallow. His face, now clean, was peaceful.

This was just the first step. Controlling the infection, flushing the silver from his system, providing nutrition... the path ahead was a minefield.

But at least, for the first time, I wasn't walking it alone.