

Chapter 6: Brave

Yara

Replacement? I can't be a replacement. I'm not staying. As soon as Alpha...as soon as Warren's leg is done, I'm out of here. I glance up at the broody Alpha and wonder if that's true. Is he going to let me go?

The news about Simon has me worried. If there is a paper trail of his father helping me through medical school...he'll find me.

"Arric?" I say distractedly, holding the bones together while he heals them.

I have to get my car, my clothes. I have to get back to school, I'm a resident, I can't just up and leave.

"Tell me where your car is and I'll have someone go get it. Same with your clothes. As far as your schooling goes, we'll have to talk about you taking classes online and working your 'residency' did you call it, here," Warren says.

I frown at him. "How did you...?"

"You were talking to yourself. It wasn't hard to hear you."

"I can't leave school, Warren," I say, looking at him like he's crazy.

"I didn't say you'd be leaving school. I said you'd be doing your residency here. You can take classes online," he says as if that settles it.

"Excuse me? You can't keep me here!"

He merely raises that damn eyebrow at me again.

"You're not my Alpha..." I begin.

He leans forward. "What I am is your mate. Tell me truthfully, if I let you go back to school and I come to visit you in say a week's time, will you still be there?"

I look away, beginning to work on his leg again and refusing to answer him. Even if he wasn't my mate, knowing that Simon may be able to figure out where I am, would have me transferring immediately.

"That's what I thought and that, my dear mate, is why I'm not letting you leave."

He sits back and both of us get lost in our own thoughts again as I let Arric know when I'm ready for him to heal the bones.

"Why did you say I was brave earlier?"

"What?" he asks, and I can tell the pain is getting to him.

"Earlier, you said you knew I was intelligent, compassionate, brave, and lonely. The intelligent and compassionate I understand, the lonely you explained, but why did you say you think I'm brave?" I ask him.

"When you heard my pack, you didn't run. You could have. You didn't know they were my pack members. You looked like you were ready

to fight, to defend me. For someone who's not a fighter, that takes guts."

I look up at him, frowning. "How do you know I'm not a fighter?"

"You're not built like one," he says simply.

"Are you saying I'm fat?" I ask, insulted. I work out at the human gym. I know I need to let Annika out more often to run, but I'm not overweight, even by werewolf standards.

"You know you're not," he says, watching me. "But I saw you naked. Those of us who have been fighting in pack wars almost daily for years don't have the softness to their body that you have. And before you go jumping to any conclusions, I find your body very attractive, very sexy."

I stop what I'm doing, not sure how to respond to that.

"Sexy. That's not a word that has been used to describe me in the past," I say, and realize that once again I spoke out loud.

I look up at him and see him smiling at me. "Some people, like myself, find intelligence sexy. But, I've been itching to touch you, to run my hands over the softness of your body, since the moment I saw you."

"Some people, like myself, find it hard to believe that someone caught in a bear trap was 'itching' to touch me," I say, rolling my eyes at him.

"Then that should tell you just how strong the pull of the mate bond is. As much as what you're doing hurts, just having you touch me helps with the pain. Your scent in this room, which gets stronger the

longer you are in here, is helping me manage the pain. As an Alpha, it's one of the benefits of finding your Luna, your fated mate. You are the other half of my soul, and at the risk of sounding cheesy, you complete me on more than one level. Now, I have a question for you."

"Okay," I say, still focusing on his leg.

"Why didn't you run?"

I stop and look at him like he's crazy. "You were injured. If they weren't your pack, they would have killed you."

That damn eyebrow goes up again. "And they would have killed you too."

"I didn't rescue from a bear trap to leave you to die at the hands of the assholes who set it in the first place!" I say.

"Sooo, you're more stubborn than brave?"

"Call it what you will. I wasn't going to leave you to die," I say.

"Thank you."

I wait for more, and when there isn't, I look up at him. "For what?"

"For getting me out of that bear trap, for not leaving when I could have been killed, and for not letting Dr. Stevens take my leg."

"He really needs to retire," I say.

"Which is why you're going to replace him," he says arrogantly.

"I am not going to replace him, Warren. I have school. I have...labs

and exams and things like that.

"We can talk to the school and figure out the labs. As I said, and you must know, you'll get more opportunity to practice your skills here in my pack than you will in some human school's laboratory. And exams can be taken online. People do it all the time. Any other arguments that I can negate for you?" he asks me.

"So arrogant," I mutter angrily.

"Confident," he says.

"What?" I ask, frowning.

"I'm not arrogant, I'm confident. There's a difference."

"How do you keep hearing what I'm saying?" I ask him.

"How long have you been living with humans? I think you've forgotten how sensitive a werewolf's hearing is and I'm an Alpha, mine's more sensitive than most."

UGH! I've been living with humans long enough that I've gotten used to muttering to myself without others being able to hear me. Now, I'm going to have to start being careful what I say so I don't offend anyone.

There's a knock at the door.

"Come in," Warren calls out.

"Does no one know that this is a surgery room?" I mutter, already forgetting that he can hear me.

"Uh, excuse me doctor. I have one of the omegas here that sews our clothing, but she says she doesn't know how to sew up a warrior," Warren's Beta, Charlie, says. I turn and see a wide-eyed young woman staring at Warren's leg on the table.

"Give me a moment, I'll be right there," I say, quickly taking a towel and covering his leg. I don't want to have to smell vomit while I work.

Charlie takes her from the room and I turn back to Warren's leg. "Okay, I have all the small pieces underneath back in place. There are going to be some slivers that I won't be able to put back in, but hopefully Arric can work around the small pieces of missing bone."

"I'm a strong Alpha wolf, mate. I'll make it work," he says, once again sounding like he's strutting proudly for me.

"Right. So, I'm going to put the big bone fragment against the existing bone and let you start healing it while I go check on these other warriors. When I come back, I'll finish putting the smaller pieces over top and then we can get you sewn up and nearly back to normal, Alpha."

"Warren, Yara. Call me Warren," he says and I can hear the fatigue in his voice.

I look up into his brownish-green eyes, his very expressive eyes. And right now, those eyes look exhausted. I move closer to him and put my hands on his chest, pushing him back into a lying down position.

"Why don't you rest while I'm gone?" I say gently. "You've had a long day and your body needs to heal." I watch as his eyes start to drift

closed. I know it's a bad idea, I know I shouldn't, but my fingers have been itching to touch him since I've seen him too. I gently run my fingers through his hair, feeling how soft it is in the places where it isn't covered in blood. 1

"Sleep, Warren. I'll be here when you wake up."

I'm not sure what makes me do it, but I lean in and press my lips to his, hearing him sigh as his body falls into a deep sleep.

"Sleep well, Warren," I whisper in his ear, then I cover his leg and step out of the room, letting his Beta know that someone needs to watch the room and protect their Alpha while I go help the nurses and omegas in the hospital.



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