

## Chapter 9: Secrets

Yara

I'm so tired, but my body is extremely uncomfortable, making it impossible to sleep. I must be in some weird position. Did I fall asleep studying again?

When I open my eyes, I remember immediately where I am. I'm in Warren's pack hospital and I spent more time in one night taking care of injured warriors than I've spent in all my days of residency at the hospital.

Since my senses are full of Warren's teakwood scent, I know that I'm laying beside him on the bed. However, I smell Charlie as well. What's strange to me is that neither of them is talking.

I carefully open my eyes and without moving, I look around to see that they are looking at each other. They must be using the mind link. I haven't used it in years and even before that, I barely used it, not having a family or really a lot of friends since Alpha Solomon adopted me.

When I refocus on Warren laying in front of me, I see some mechanical devices laying on his stomach.

"What are those?" I ask, pushing myself up and stretching my neck and back before looking at the two men.

"These are tracking devices, Yara," Warren says, watching me carefully.

There's something in his look that makes me think that this is significant, but for the life of me, I have no idea what I'm missing. Maybe I'm just really tired.

"What are you tracking?" I ask, picking one up and looking at it. I'm a naturally curious person. Alpha Solomon found it to be a sweet part of my personality, but many people find it annoying. I like to understand things, to see them, touch them, smell them. I don't particularly like taking someone else's word for what something is. It could just be their interpretation of what it is which happens a lot in medicine.

"I'm not tracking anything." When he doesn't elaborate, I look up at him, setting the tracker back down.

"Then why do you have them?"

"Charlie and my warriors found them on your car when he wanted to pick it up." 1

I look down at the trackers again, this time as if they are snakes that will lash out and bite me. I feel lightheaded as the realization hits me that this must be Simon. He found me, or at least found my car.

"Whoa, Doc," Warren says gently, sitting up and wrapping an arm around my waist. "Take it easy. You're safe." He somehow manages to pull me onto the bed with him, but I'm so focused on the trackers that I barely notice.

"Why so many?" I whisper.

"Someone wants to know where you live, where you go," Charlie says, watching me just as intently as Warren is.

"Why do I get the feeling that you might know who did this?" Warren asks.

"I..." Shit! If he knows about Simon, he'll never let me leave. I just need to figure out how to get out of this pack and get away from here without Simon finding me. I was right, he must have tracked me to the school. I didn't notice anyone else, Annika and I didn't smell anyone else around the woods when we went for a run, but that doesn't mean that they didn't show up afterward.

"I have no idea why someone would be so interested in tracking me," I say, unable to look at either Warren or Charlie. I don't get the idea that either man is stupid, so I'm sure they know that I'm lying. I just need time to think. I need to figure out what I'm going to do.

"I see," Warren says, and it's obvious that he does know I'm lying. "Well, someone is looking for you and since I'm in a pack war with multiple Alphas, I'm going to let my pack and patrols know that you aren't allowed anywhere near the borders."

"WHAT? You can't do that!"

"I'm the Alpha of this pack. It's my job to keep you safe," he says. So arrogant!

"I am not your pack member. You don't have to do anything for me," I say, trying hard to be firm. I'm pretty sure it just comes across as snarky.

Warren leans in, so close that I can feel his breath on my lips. Nerve endings light up all over my body at his close proximity.

"You are my mate. Your safety is my number one priority."

I can't look away from him. His brownish-green eyes are flashing with frustration and also something that looks similar to the desire that I'm feeling as well.

I shove my distracting desire for this man down and narrow my eyes at him. "And just how is it that you intend to keep me safe when your leg is still healing, Alpha? Hmmm? You're in no position to protect anyone at the moment."

It's a low blow, one that I expect will anger him and have him losing his temper with me. But not Warren. If anything, he takes my words as a challenge and he ups the ante.

"Then, I'll guess you'll just have to stay by my side, indefinitely, until I know that you're safe. I guess that's the only way that I can ensure your safety while I'm healing."

"You are insufferable!" I growl.

That sexy smile spreads across his face. "Is that why your heart rate has increased, and your cheeks are flushed, doctor? Because I'm insufferable? Or maybe it's my insufferability that has you practically crawling into my lap."

"Wha...?" I say, looking down and realize that he has somehow managed to get me to lean over his body as if I'm about to straddle

him. As if I was about to...oh good grief! I hope he didn't mistake what I was doing...

"I... This is very inappropriate, to be sure," I say, scrambling off the bed quickly.

"I didn't find it inappropriate at all, little mate," he purrs. I ignore that.

"I'm obviously tired, not thinking straight..." I gesture to the trackers still laying on this bed. "I'm overwrought with concern for who would be doing this. And, you need your rest. I'll let you get some sleep," I say, taking a step toward the door. That's as far as I get before he speaks.

"I don't think so doctor. I just told you that you'll be at my side for the foreseeable future. If you're leaving, I'll just have to hop out of bed and follow you," he says, and I turn to glare at him.

"Does that seem like an appropriate therapeutic approach to you, Beta Charlie?"

"No, Alpha. It doesn't," he says, turning to look at me, not able to hide his smile.

"Yeah, I definitely don't like you," I grumble.

"Good to know, since you're MY mate," Warren says, his smile becoming feral.

I huff at him. "I need to check on my other patients," I say to him, really needing to get out of this room with this man's incredible scent everywhere. It's making it hard to think.

"Charlie will come with you," he says.

"I don't need a chaperone, Alpha," I snap.

"Consider him a guard then. It's him or me," he says.

I turn, heading to the door. "I don't like you very much either," I grumble to myself.

"I'm an acquired taste," he says.

I yank the door open, turning to see him grinning at me as if he's won this round of word slinging. As I step out of the room, I have to admit, he probably did.



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