

Chapter 38

That was it; he wasn't even going to attempt to explain what he meant? The loss of their presence was instantly felt. The coldness of the bond slowly evaporated into the air, and I sighed, wondering if I would ever get used to losing their loss every time I saw one of them.

It was making it increasingly difficult to hate them when the bond played havoc constantly when they were around.

Darius's words made no sense. Why would he have to protect me from my own parents? I know what I saw, if only briefly.

There was no doubt in my mind that he was the reason they were dead.

I tried to remember that night, but nothing stuck out or showed my parents had anything to do with the fire. Stoking the fire, I got up before picking up the plate that I had purposely eaten slowly, wanting to save some of the meat for the Phoenix.

My eyes moved to the door; they came in the main one and went out of the bathroom one. With a glance over my shoulder, I walked over to the main door and twisted the handle, and my heart leaped with joy when I noticed it was unlocked. It was odd for them to forget to lock me in. Usually, I woke to the door being unlocked, but they always locked it when they went to sleep.

Quietly as possible, I rushed around the room, grabbing my

supplies. I grabbed a tissue and wrapped what was left of my dinner in it, before retrieving my old bandages. Grabbing one of my pillows off the bed, I snuck over to the door. Listening for any noise out in the hall. When I thought the coast was clear, I turned the knob slowly, so it didn't grind. My heart hammered in my chest at the thought of being caught sneaking out.

Once in the hall, I glanced down the dimly lit hallway toward the stairs. Rushing to them with hesitant steps and only stopping at the top to look back the way I came for any sign of them. They hadn't noticed, and I slipped down to the bottom level. It was clear everyone was tucked safely away in their dorm rooms because I saw nobody wandering about. The place was dark, and I noticed the glow of the door handles that led outside in the foyer area. They glowed a fluorescent orange, and I wandered over to them.

It took only seconds for me to recognize it for what it was, wards. Darius's magic emanated from it, and I wondered if he spelled the castle every night. My head turned back to the stairs, and I reached out before pausing as I went to grip the door handle. I wanted to see if I could siphon it, but I also didn't want to risk him noticing. I also wasn't sure if I would be blasted like an intruder by touching it. Definitely worth investigating later on, but I needed to check my Phoenix for now.

The doors to the mess hall were closed as I approached the cellar door leading to the cells. With a pull, the door opened, and I descended the steps while feeling for a light switch. It

wasn't until I reached the bottom that I found it, and I quickly flicked the light on. The bird cawed a yelp before calming when he noticed me.

"Shh, it's only me," I whispered to him as I stepped into the cell. He observed me carefully, and I knew he was unsure of me. Phoenix's were brilliant birds and could sense power. Even without magic, I could tell he knew something was different about me being a harmony fae. They could feel it. Phoenix's were almost drawn to the white-Fae, making me wonder if he had sensed me here, wherever here was. Just like Darius and I, Phoenix's were a dying species. They were killed off by dark-Fae and considered pests because they hated dark-Fae and were known for attacking them. So most when found were killed, which was sad because they were amazing creatures. They were just a little temperamental when it came to the dark-Fae, but they were amazing despite their hate for the dark-Fae.

Sitting beside him, I opened the tissue and pulled out the cut-up meat. I tried to wipe some of the sauce off, but he didn't seem to care, pecking at my open palm, wanting to eat it. I held up a piece to his beak, and he pinched it before tossing his head back and gulping it down.

His beak nudged my hand, wanting more, so I continued to feed him. Hoping I was gaining its trust because I wasn't looking forward to being bitten after watching its peak slice through the beef like a knife through butter. Its snake-like tongue slivered out, turning the beef strip this way and that as

he hungrily ate.

"Do you have a name?" I asked it. The Pheonix tilted its head to the side. I tapped my chin, trying to think of one.

"What about flame?" The bird tilted its head the other way. "Scorch?" it shook its head. "Ember?" It appeared to huff, puffing out its chest and making the feathers stand upon his head. "How about Ryze, with a Z," I offer, and it blinked at me before nudging my face with its giant beak.

"Ryze, it is then," I chuckle.

"Now, are you going to bite me when I try to wrap your wing? If you are, a warning would be nice, but I will try to be gentle," I tell him while scratching the top of its head. The Pheonix watched me unravel the bandages, and I carefully plucked him from where he sat on the bed, placing him on my lap. He whimpered, and his snake-like tongue slivered out to lick at my hand placed under his chest.

"I'm sorry, I am trying to be gentle," I told Ryze. I bandaged him up and then placed him on the pillow, and tucked my jumper and pillowcase on him to keep him warm.

"I need to go, but I will be back in the morning. You have to be quiet, though." I told him. Ryze fluffed out his remaining feathers before ducking his head under his good wing. I sighed and rushed out of the cellar and slipped back into my room.

Chapter 39

Aleera POV

I was awoken the following day by the alarm next to my bed. I tossed and turned all night after what Darius said to me, so my eyes felt like sandpaper. My mind went to the Phoenix when I sat up. I needed to steal some breakfast before classes started and quickly check on him. Tossing the blanket off, I heard something slip off the end of the bed with a thump on the floorboards. Walking around to the end of my bed, I found a box. I bent down and plucked it off the floor and turned it over. A sticky note was stuck to it, so I peeled it off.

"I already hooked it up to the Wi-Fi. You just need to turn it on, love Kalen," it read. Looking at the box. I found it was a tablet. Was Darius aware he had given it to me, and why would he allow it? I pulled it from the box and looked at the shiny device. It was so much better than my old one. Shiny and new. I pressed the power button, and it lit up. No doubt they would track everything I did on it. I knew not even Kalen would be stupid enough to give me a device that could link me to the outside world and not have put parental controls on it.

Despite that, I smiled, wondering if I could speak to my pen pal friend or would Darius become angry. But he was aware, so he couldn't very well get mad, could he? I dressed quickly and made my way down to the mess hall. The door wasn't opened yet, and I had to wait. When they did, the demon that opened

them sneered at me, and I gulped, taking a step away from him.

He said nothing but turned on his heel and walked back out to the kitchens. My stomach growled hungrily at the smell of food. He placed the huge trays out, and I quickly grabbed a bowl, filling it with some dry cereal and another. I put some eggs and bacon on before retrieving a water bottle and slipped out before he returned. Although it was necessary to steal food, I felt like a thief. I couldn't live on air alone. After I walked down to the Phoenix, he ignored the dry cereal I placed in front of him and beckoned at my eggs instead.

"You know that is probably in some small way a relation you are eating," I told him. He chuffed and pecked at my bowl, and I sighed, placing it on the bed beside him so he could help himself. I chewed on a piece of bacon before eating the dry cereal. When I finished, I opened the water bottle and poured some in a bowl so he could have a drink. He guzzled it thirstily while I pulled the tablet from the back of my pants.

The device was definitely monitored, I couldn't access much on the internet, and half the apps didn't work. Despite it being pointless, I typed in the old chat group name and was surprised it didn't shut me out.

After logging in and trying to remember my password, I discovered my email account was shut down, and I had to create a new one. With a sigh, I typed in the search bar HTIARW. To my surprise, the account still existed. I wondered if the person would still remember me or even want to talk to me.

e when I abruptly quit talking to them. Regardless, I sent a message explaining I had a new account and telling them my old login name, and also explained I couldn't get into my old one. With a sigh, I turned the screen off. "I suppose now we wait," I told Ryze. He nudged me with his beak, eating the rest of my eggs.

When the siren blared, signaling the start of classes, I groaned and got to my feet, saying goodbye to my not so feathery friend. Climbing the stairs, I waited for there to be no sounds, before slipping out and over to my first class, which was with Tobias. As I walked down the hall, I was snatched and instantly thrashed as they dragged me into a nearby classroom.

They let me go, and I turned to find it was Darius. "Where did you sneak off to this morning?" he asked.

"To breakfast," I told him.

"I checked, and you weren't in there," he snapped at me. I took a step back before noticing Tobias leaning against the wall.

With a roll of his eyes, he pushed off the wall. "Can we get this over with? I have a class to teach," Tobias said in a bored tone. I glanced between them, wondering what he meant when Darius grabbed me. The moment he wrapped his arm across my chest and jerked me against him, I shrieked. Darius tucked me against him. He grabbed my wrist, offering it to Tobias, who snatched it in his tight grip while I struggled against Darius's hold.

"We warned you last night this was necessary, now remain still," he snarled next to my ear. I stopped, and Tobias sank his teeth into my wrist, and I looked away while he fed off me. Though his grip only tightened, and after a few minutes and he hadn't stopped, I felt light-headed.

"Enough, Tobias, let her go," Darius snapped at him, but he didn't. Instead, he sank his teeth in again, making me whimper.

"Tobias, I said enough," Tobias growled at him when Darius yanked my arm away, making me cry out as his teeth tore from the flesh. Tobias went to attack, but Darius flicked his wrist, and Tobias hit a barrier and froze. My eyes widened, and Tobias appeared stunned. Darius then bit his wrist and jammed it against my mouth. I turned my face, not wanting his blood.

"Now, that shield won't hold long," Darius growled, and I opened my mouth, hating the idea of drinking his blood directly from him. I sputtered, and he ripped his wrist away before shoving me away. Only when he did, he yanked me back toward him before reaching down the back of my pants and yanking out the tablet.

"Where did you get this?"

"It was on my bed; Kalen gave it to me," I told him. My body tensed, and I flinched when he examined it. He glared at it before thrusting it back at me.

I hesitantly took it before he looked at Tobias. "Go before I change my mind," Darius spat at me, and I rushed out.

Chapter 40

Darius POV

I was on a warpath as I hunted Kalen down. Lycus jumped as I entered the bedroom, not expecting my burning anger. My eyes went to Kalen, and so did Lycus, as I pinned him with my stare. Kalen rolled his eyes, and I wasn't sure I liked this attitude he was developing with Aleera here.

My steps were purposeful as I stalked toward him, where he sat. He didn't move, and it was clear he expected my anger at what he had done but also didn't care for it. Lycus moved quickly as I approached Kalen, stepping into my path before reaching him, and my chest smacked against his. Lycus growled at me, and his eyes flickered to his beast.

"Move, Lycus," I snarled while glaring at him. Lycus however, only pressed closer. The anger coursing through him matched mine as a growl rumbled from his chest. The threatening noise was a warning not to push him too hard, or he would bite.

"You won't touch him. You can try, but I won't allow it," Lycus sneered as he stood chest to chest with me.

"Have I ever hurt him?" I asked, but his gaze hardened like steel before he spoke.

"No, but when it comes to her, you can be erratic, and I don't like what I am feeling from you," Lycus told me, and his words shocked me. Did he not trust me with our mate? I would never

hurt them, not purposely, and they should trust me, at least when it came to them. His words stung and shocked me.

“Chill, Lycus. He is just upset because I gave Aleera a tablet.” Lycus' brows scrunched together as he glanced over his shoulder at our mate.

“You what?” Well, maybe I am not the only one that could be erratic. Now Kalen was keeping secrets from Lycus. It was apparent Lycus didn't like that either. He turned toward our mate and folded his arms across his chest, and glared at him.

“She won't try to run,” Kalen answered confidently, not even bothering to look at Lycus, who frowned. I hated to be the one to tell him, but Aleera would run the first chance she got. I could see it clear as day, and he was a fool for believing otherwise.

“I deleted half the software; the only people she can contact is the old chat group we created, besides the castle portal, not that she has tried to open it yet,” Kalen answered.

“And you didn't think to tell us?” Lycus growled at him.

“You would have said no,” Kalen answered, looking over at him before he leaned forward, reaching into the coffee table drawer and pulling his phone out.

“Yes, because we don't want you talking to her. Remember what happened last time, Kalen. It isn't worth the risk,” Lycus said, marching over to him and snatching the phone from his hand. Kalen sighed before standing up, and Lycus unlocked his

phone. Standing behind Lycus, I peered over his shoulder when Kalen snatched the phone from his grip.

“Use your own,” Kalen snapped at us.

“I don’t like this Darius, tell him,” Lycus said, turning to me. I scoffed and looked at him.

“What, now are you on my side?” I asked him.

“I didn’t know he gave her a device,” Lycus said.

“I don’t want you talking to her without us. You stepped out of line this time, Kalen,” Lycus snapped at him..

“Lines should be stepped over, Lycus, so stop being a dick. I already uploaded and logged in off all your phones. You can monitor everything if you want,” Kalen answered. Lycus muttered under his breath before pulling his phone out and unlocking it.

“I want nothing to do with this. You monitor their conversations if she tries to talk to him,” I told Lycus.

“I still don’t like this,” Lycus muttered, opening the app when it suddenly dinged.

“Who is that? I swear if you are talking to other people, Kalen/ I will put you over my damn knee,” I snapped at him, seeing a n unusual thread pop up. Lycus clicked on it. “It’s Aleera. She opened up a new account,” Kalen sighed, and I eyed him. I know he was hoping she would open up her old one and realize it was him she spoke to for all those years.

“So this over your knee thing is still a possibility?” Kalen taunted with a devious smile on his lips. Lycus raised his eyes to him with a smirk on his face. I clicked my tongue before moving toward Kalen, where he sat on the chair. I leaned over the back of it, and he looked up at me and smiled; his hand reached out for me.

“Maybe later,” I told him before pressing my lips to his. He gripped the back of my neck and ran his tongue across my lips. I growled at him, my cock twitching to life, making me want to bend him over and fuck his tight ass. My groan made him smile against my lips, and I kissed him deeper, my tongue invading his mouth. All too quickly, I pulled away before I got carried away and made good on my desire to fuck him senseless. Kalen pouted, and I pecked his lips.

“Behave, I love you,” I told him, and he sighed as I stood up. Lycus watched us before adjusting the crotch of his pants, clearly turned on at watching us.

“Monitor them,” I told him, and he nodded as I approached him. “I still don’t like it,” Lycus said, looking over my shoulder at our mate. “I know, but I have to get to class,” I told him, kissing the side of his mouth.

“Watch him,”

“Always,” Lycus mumbled against my lips before I walked out to give hell to my morning class. And it would be hell because I was in a mood, and Aleera would want to behave because I was bound to snap at some point.

Chapter 41

Aleera POV

For the past three days, I have felt terribly sick. I don't know if it's because I have only been getting half a breakfast a day since I shared with Ryze, or because of the bond. The siren for the next glass sounded, and I groaned. I wished I had a theory class all day; I would have even put up with Darius and Tobias's torment. The last thing I felt like doing was that damn obstacle course. 2

Darius looked over at me and placed my head on the desk, not wanting to go. I felt hot, and my skin was clammy. My stomach was twisting violently, and I was hungry as well as pained. "Aleera, next class," Darius said, and I looked up at him.

"Can I go back to my room? I don't feel well,"

"Class now, or you won't see Kalen after dinner," Darius snapped at me and hauled my ass out of my seat. Seeing Kalen was the only thing I looked forward to besides seeing Ryze. I grip the desk as a wave of dizziness washed over me, and Darius watched me stagger to the front of the class before turning his gaze away. "Asshole," I muttered under my breath.

"Want to repeat that?" Darius growled behind me, and I looked back at him. He glared at me and went to get up. I quickly rushed out the door. Making my way down the

corridors, I felt my stomach heave up my throat and ran to the closest trash can before throwing up in it. No, please, I thought as I lost my breakfast. I wiped my mouth on the back of my hand and staggered to the bathroom. I drank from the tap, knowing that I would stumble across someone if I went to the mess hall.

I wet my face, trying to cool myself down after retching. Looking in the oval-shaped mirror above the sink my face was pale, and my eyes sunken in. My stomach growled hungrily, and I drank some more water, trying to fill it enough to stop the loud gurgling noises it was making. Wetting the back of my neck, I leaned on the basin, trying to force myself to head to the next class.

My tablet Bing's, and I pull it out. My pen pal remembered me, and we had been talking for the last few days. I excitedly opened up the chat.

'How's your day?' They asked.

I looked at the mirror. Shit! I thought, looking at my hollow cheeks. I had lost so much weight with the training and not eating I was starting to look gaunt in the face. I shake my head, wondering how it was possible in such a brief period.

'Crap, I feel sick and have to go to class,' I replied as I made my way out.

They responded with a sad emoji.

'How's yours?' I asked.

'Boring, locked away as usual,' they replied. My pen pal had told me they too were having mate drama, that he didn't get out much.

'Which class are you in next?' they asked.

'Stupid training one with Tobias,'

'You really don't like that guy, huh?' I chuckle. I had told him all about my asshole mates and the nasty shit they did. Well, except Kalen.

'You wouldn't either if he used you like his personal juice box daily, and you were starving after only getting one meal or half a meal a day,' I replied.

'Your mates starve you?' He replied, and I sighed.

'No, but I'm too scared to go to dinner or lunch in the mess hall because of the other men. Last time one put my hand in a boiling pot,' I replied.

They didn't reply straight away, so I continued to the obstacle course and walked over to where they were stretching.

'Who did?' came their reply.

'Some dick called Deacon, they will get bored eventually and leave me alone,' I replied when my tablet was plucked from my grip. I looked up to see Tobias glaring at me.

"No distractions. Now get out there," he snapped at me. I went to ask if I could sit out, but he growled, so I dropped my

head and started running. My stomach was sloshing from all the water I drank, making me regret that stupid idea to curb my hunger. Lesson learned.

The demons were shoving and pushing as I tried to remain on the track. Running out of breath because bile rushed up to my throat, I pulled off to the side and threw up again. Zac sniggers as he passes me and nudges me.

"Can't hack it, Aleera," he taunts before I throw up again.

"Aleera!" Tobias calls, and I look up, hoping he would say I could go inside. He points to the track, and my shoulders sag as I turn around. My surroundings spun, and I found the heat made it increasingly difficult to breathe.

The ground felt like it was moving under my feet, and I felt delirious as I stumbled my way back onto the track.

My harsh, labored breathing could be heard in my head along with my heartbeat when I felt my eyes roll into the back of my head. I knew I hit the ground, but I felt nothing, no pain, nothing as darkness swallowed me. I fainted.

Someone was tapping my face, my ears were ringing, and I could hear a faint voice calling my name. The sun shone through the backs of my eyelids, and I blinked dazed, only to look into the eyes of Tobias.

He turns my face from side to side before prying my eyelids open when I close them. "Yep, you're done for the day," he said, scooping me up in his arms. I kept going in and out of

consciousness, but I was soon inside the air-conditioning, making me shiver after being outside in the blistering sun.

"What happened?" I heard Darius ask, and I blinked open my eyes to find I was back in my room. Darius shuts the door while Tobias places me on the bed. I could hear them talking but paid no attention.

"Heatstroke, maybe?" Tobias says.

"She complained about being sick in class. She looked pale then too,"

"So you forced her to my class," Tobias snapped when I felt his teeth sink into my wrist. I groaned, hoping he wouldn't take much. I was already light-headed enough. "Anything?" Darius asks.

"No, not poison, but her iron is a little low. I had noticed that over the last few days," Darius sighed when the door opened again.

"Lycus said she fainted," I heard Kalen's voice. I couldn't remember seeing Lycus, but then again, I don't remember the walk to the room.

"Where is he?"

"Making her something to eat," Kalen answers before the bed dips beside me. He brushed my hair from my face and leaned over me. "You okay?" He asked, and I shook my head. My stomach was beginning to cramp like I had a stitch.

The door opened again, and I knew it was Lycus this time. "I need to get to class, but I will see you tonight after dinner," Tobias says, making me wonder where he was going. "Oh, almost forgot her tablet,"

"Why do you have it?"

"Confiscated it. She was using it when she came out," Tobias said, and I heard the door close as he left.

"You two right with her?"

"Fine," Lycus says, sounding angry.

"What's wrong with you?" Darius asked him.

"Later, not now," I looked at Lycus as he sat beside me before Kalen helped me sit up. I leaned heavily against him, and Lycus placed a plate of tomato and cheese sandwiches on my lap cut into triangles.

"Eat it will make you feel better," Lycus says, pressing one to my lips. Kalen looks at him funny before he grabs my tablet at my feet. I try to reach for it, not wanting him to read my messages, but he places it on charge.

"Eat!" Lycus snaps, pressing the sandwich triangle to my lips again. I take a bite, and he seems to relax but insists on feeding me like a child. I noticed Kalen watching him, just as confused as I was about his strange behavior. When he presses a third against my lips, I shake my head. Hoping Lycus would leave it so I could sneak down to feed my Phoenix tonight. He

had started to heal and had some feathers coming back. His wing was still injured, but Ryze was on the mend.

Chapter 42

Lycus and Kalen stayed for a while, and whatever Lycus was angry about, even bothered Kalen as he repeatedly asked what was wrong. Lycus only growled before eventually storming out, saying he had to take care of something.

It was now dark, and I wondered how long they would let Kalen stay. What I was most surprised about was the fact Lycus had left me alone with him. That never happened; Kalen was always chaperoned around me, but whatever pissed him off must have made him forget that I wasn't alone with him.

"I wonder how long until he realizes?" Kalen murmured, and I looked at him.

"Realizes what?"

"That he left me alone with you, Darius will be furious," Kalen answers, and I nod, hoping I won't cop the brunt of that fury. With a sigh, I stood up, and Kalen looked at me.

"Where are you going?"

"To shower, and you should go before we both get in trouble," I told him, and he nodded and stood. "It will get easier," Kalen says, and I look back at him.

"It's only because they don't trust you," Kalen answers. "And they're too stubborn to see their own flaws," he added.

“What’s done is done; it changes nothing. He still killed my parents. No matter what he believed or his intentions, it would have ended up this way,” I told Kalen and instantly regretted it when his face fell.

“Would you have run if you knew me before?” he asked, and my brows furrowed at his words as I thought them over.

“No, I would have asked you to run with me,” I told him. “But I also know you wouldn’t leave Lycus,” he nodded and went to say something before stopping himself. I walked into the bathroom and stripped my clothes off when he said nothing. My shirt stunk from sweat, and goosebumps rose on my arms as I waited for the water temperature to go up.

The cramping had gone now that I had eaten, and I was feeling a little better.

Halfway through my shower, when I was washing my hair out, I felt a draft and near jumped out of my skin when I felt someone bump into my back. A shriek left my lips as I spun, trying to cover myself. Kalen chuckled while I backed away from him, looking nervously at the door leading into his room. When I saw it was shut, I let out a breath.

“Sorry, I didn’t mean to startle you,” he said while stepping closer. His eyes dropped to my breasts I had covered with my arm.

“Kalen,” I squeaked, feeling rather exposed. I liked Kalen, but that didn’t mean I wanted him to invade my shower. My face

heated, and he smirked before dipping his face under the shower spray, and I moved closer to the wall. He reached for the soap before washing his face, and my eyes trailed down his bronze-colored skin. He was muscular but not as bulky as the others. My face heated when I followed his V-line and pressed my lips in a line, and tried not to giggle, not because he was small, but because I had never seen one up close or had seen one to compare size.

I knew it was stupid, yet I snorted, and he rubbed a hand down his face before looking at me. "Something funny?" he asked, cocking an eyebrow at me.

He raised his eyebrows at me, and I giggled like an idiot. "I don't know if it is a good thing you are laughing or if I should feel insulted," he sniggers. I tried to stop, yet they were so strange-looking and veiny. Like I wasn't a total idiot. I had seen sex scenes on TV before, but never in person, and so close I could touch it, not that I would.

"Geez, anyone would think you had never seen one before," he laughed, and my giggling cut off abruptly. Oh my God, how embarrassing. Here I am giggling like some schoolgirl because I was 24 and had never seen a dick before. Kalen stopped laughing and stared at me.

"Wait, please tell me you have?" I shake my head, and his eyes widen before he suddenly covers himself with his hand. "Well, this got awkward fast," he said, looking away.

"Have you really never seen a dick before?" he asked.

“The girls had separate bathrooms,” I told him.

“But you're 24,” I shrug.

“Wait, are you a virgin?” I could feel my blush all the way from my head to my toes. I was never embarrassed about my virginity, but how he said it made me feel inexperienced and naive. Well, technically, that would make me inexperienced, but it still didn't stop my embarrassment. I moved from one foot to the other awkwardly while he stared at me.

“Can you not stare?” My voice is barely audible.

“Sorry, I am just in shock. The others are convinced you ran off with some man.”

“I told you I didn't,” he nods, and I realize none of them believed me, even after Tobias confirmed I wasn't lying as if I could somehow get away with it. He went to say something when the door suddenly burst open, and a frantic Lycus and Darius walked in. I shrieked, ripping Kalen toward me, using him as a shield in front of me. Could this get any more embarrassing? I heard their collective sigh of relief.

“Everything alright?” Kalen asked. Neither of them said anything for a few seconds. And I was too embarrassed to peak around to see their faces. One of them cleared their throat, and I heard a growl.

“You weren't in the room,” I heard Darius say.

“Yeah, because I was in the shower,” Kalen said.

“I can see that,” Darius said, and Lycus growled.

“Just showering, nothing else going on Lycus, no need to be jealous,” Kalen snapped at him, which only made him growl louder before he stormed out.

“Come on, out. You know better,”

“Fuck, why are you being a dick and acting like I am cheating? She is our mate too,” Kalen snapped, and I looked up at his shoulders, and they tensed.

“You know why, now out,” Darius snapped.

“Well, at least leave so she can put a towel on,”

“I have already seen her naked, and I wasn't impressed,” he retorted, and I could hear the anger in his voice. My face heated embarrassed, and I know his words shouldn't have hurt, but they still stung. It was one thing hearing the whispers in school about my burns, but another when you repulsed your own mates. Kalen snarled, and the air chilled significantly, making goosebumps rise on my arms, and the tension in the room rose significantly.

“Either you're blind or jealous because I have seen how every man watches her, including you. Do you think I haven't invaded your dreams, Darius? Because they say a lot about how you feel about her,” Kalen snapped at him. Darius growled at him while I chewed my lip wanting to escape the situation.

“Out now,” Darius snapped at him.

“Should we pretend you don’t sneak into her room and watch her while she sleeps?” Kalen said, and I gasped at his words.

“Kalen, one more word, and I will put her in the fucking cells,” Darius snarled before punching the tiled wall.

“And I said get out,” Kalen snapped, and I touched his side. He looked down at me, and I shook my head. He was playing with fire, and the only one that would get burned was me. I knew better. It was sweet he was defending me or whatever he was doing, but it was only going to make things worse for me.

“No, I am sick of him being a prick,” Kalen said, and he turned back to Darius. The shower screen opened, and tears burned my eyes, and I knew Darius was about to rip him out.

I didn’t want them to fight, and I certainly didn't want to get caught up in it. So I bit down on my shame and pushed past Kalen and Darius and grabbed my towel. I didn’t bother looking at either of them, just walked back to my room so I could die of shame without their watching eyes.

I quickly got dressed and heard them arguing, and for once, I locked my own doors, not wanting to be near any of them.