

Chapter 38: Forced Mates

Warren

One day very soon, I'm going to take the time I need to mark my mate. I'm getting really fed up with constant interruptions when I finally get a moment to enjoy her. However, I know now isn't the time. She's right, we have an influx of wolves coming in and as the first ones arrive, I know Yara is going to be here for quite a while.

As they start coming in, Yara goes into doctor mode, taking Noelle with her and talking to the patients and then explaining what and why she's doing what she's doing to Noelle. She grabs a clipboard and hands it to Noelle.

"Start marking down who has arrived, and what their triage status is," she tells Noelle.

As I watch, I realize that Yara already has this hospital running like a well-oiled machine. As she makes her assessments, Katie and Erica move in to start working on the ones who are lower on the risk level while she and Savannah continue to assess and Noelle documents, still listening to Yara as she explains things. I'm impressed that Noelle can listen and take notes from Yara and Savannah at the same time. Hopefully she'll be interested in staying with Charlie. Yara could use more hands in the hospital.

"How's she doing?" Charlie asks as if my thoughts conjured him to my side.

"I was just thinking that she'd make a great assistant for Yara," I tell

him, watching him smile proudly.

"How did it go? I don't see many wounded warriors coming back."

"Honestly, it was too easy. How he ever lasted as an Alpha is beyond me," Charlie says.

"I'm guessing it was his Beta. He was vying for the Alpha position and for your mate," I tell him making Charlie growl. The sound has Noelle's head shooting up in our direction.

"Sorry," Charlie says to her, his voice much softer.

"The Beta's dead, so no worries on that front," I say as Noelle returns to listening to Yara.

"How long do you think it will be before Quinton finds out about Thomas?"

"I'm not sure, but I doubt it will be long. Depending on his next step and plan of attack, he'll find out in a day or so at the most."

"Do you think he'll attack?" Charlie says, watching our mates move through the room.

"I don't know. If we hadn't gone so long without sleep, I'd say we should hit Brady's pack, but his is full of those damn booby traps and I'm not sending our warriors out there to die."

Because I've been watching her closely, I notice when Yara's nose starts twitching. She turns, looking around.

"Luna?" Noelle asks her, but Yara holds up a finger, telling her to wait.

Noelle turns and looks at Charlie, but he's focused on Yara too. We've both seen this once before. The day she found Haynes in middle of the dining hall.

I watch as Annika comes forward and Yara begins moving through the group, following her nose. As she does, the room goes quiet. The warriors understand what she's doing but the newcomers are watching and wondering why she's sniffing the air like she is.

When she finds the person she's looking for, she leans over and sniffs her from head to toe.

"Where's your infection?" she asks the woman.

"Just let me die," the woman says, not even looking at Yara.

"What is your name?" Yara asks her.

The woman doesn't answer.

"Well, whatever your name is, dying isn't allowed in my hospital. It sets a bad precedent. One person dies and then everyone coming in thinks they can die, too. So, no one dies in my hospital. Now, where's your infection?" 1

The woman turns her head and looks at Yara. "They killed my mate. They killed my son, and that bastard forced his mark on me. I refused to give him the pup he wanted. Let. Me. Die," she growls.

I take a step forward, but Yara leans over the woman, and I have to smile. In this hospital, my mate is the strongest member of the pack, even rivaling me. Her will to help and protect is incredible.

"Now you listen to me. If losing your mate and pup didn't kill you, then you need to take that up with the Moon Goddess. If you're still alive, there's a reason for it and I'm not going to be the one who has to tell the Moon Goddess that I went against her will and let you die. So I will ask you one more time, where is your infection?"

The woman just turns away from Yara.

"Savannah, prep her for an emergency hysterectomy," Yara says. 2

"NO!" the woman screams and begins thrashing. Yara moves to hold her down and I'm beside her in an instant. I growl at the woman, pushing my Alpha aura over her.

"Calm down!" I growl.

The woman begins sobbing and I look at Yara. She presses her lips together, but Savannah gets the IV into her arm and it's only a couple of moments before the woman is unconscious.

"Yara, are you sure..."

"We'll have to deal with the aftermath, Warren. But she won't survive whatever she's done. She's sick with infection. If she chooses to end her life after I save her, that's on her. I'm not letting her die on me."

I reach out, stroking her cheek. My mate is so passionate. Goddess I can't wait for that passion to be turned on me.

"Go do what you do best, Yara," I tell her.

Anna comes over with a gurney, but because of the number of

people lying on the floor, she can't get close. I lift the woman who is much lighter than she looks. Yara's right, she'll die from whatever she's done without my mate's intervention.

"Noelle, you're with me. Do you know anything about assisting in a surgery?"

"No, Luna."

"Anna? Katie? Erica?" she asks.

"I can, Luna," Erica says.

"Savannah, keep triaging. Noelle, give your clipboard to Anna. Katie, do what you can until you need to stop," she says, before pushing the gurney into one of the rooms.

"Wow," a woman says from where she's lying on the floor beside me.

"You have no idea," I say, watching as my mate closes the door to the surgery room. Her eyes meet mine and I wink at her. I see a partial smile before she closes the door. Good.

I turn back to the room. "Now, what was this about being forcibly marked? I know some of you have minor injuries or are suffering from the death of your mates..."

"Good riddance. He was no mate of mine," a woman says angrily, and several others agree.

I move to them, and Charlie walks up behind me to listen. Several other warriors do as well.

"Tell me about that," I say, squatting down next to the women as Savannah, Katie, and Anna continue moving around the room.

"They came into our pack and took us. Not all of us were mated like Farrah."

"Farrah, the woman Luna Yara took in for surgery?" Charlie asks.

"Yeah. Some of us were unmated, but when they came in, they either dragged us back to their pack with them or they forced their mark on us right there." She glances around at the group of mostly women lying on the blankets on the floor waiting for Savannah to triage them. "Some were...passed around." 1

Arric growls low in his chest. "Which pack did you come from?"

"Alpha Harold's. We were forced to accept Alpha Thomas as our Alpha so I'm sure Alpha Harold thinks we're dead."

I turn and look up at Charlie. Maybe this is why Harold is attacking the packs. He wants retribution for his pack members, or maybe he's looking for them.

"Would you be willing to return to Alpha Harold's pack?" I ask them.

The women and some of the men around me nod. "He's not a bad Alpha, he's just an older Alpha. He lost his oldest son in a battle, so he's been waiting for his younger son to grow up enough to take over."

"Charlie, get the names of everyone who came from Alpha Harold's pack," I say before standing and turning back to the group. "Give your



names to my Beta and I'll call your Alpha later this morning to let him know that I have his pack members here. I'll be honest, Alpha Harold has attacked my pack along with the others, so I can't guarantee that I can get you back to him, but I'll try."

"He's not our Alpha, anymore," a woman says. Even her voice sounds weak, so I know she's one whose mate was killed. Forced or not, a mate's death still impacts the surviving mate, but in this instance, I'm guessing the lack of love between them is what is allowing these women to survive. Which makes me wonder what made Farrah survive losing her mate and her son.

"If he didn't renounce you and he's the kind of Alpha you say he is," I say to the room, "then he'll still consider himself your Alpha. Trust me. I know I would."

I feel another wave of pride from my pack warriors and this time, I realize that it's pride in me as their Alpha. I turn and look at my pack. It's good to finally feel something from them other than pain and frustration.

I smile as I look at the door where Yara is working and I realize that most of this change has to do with my mate walking into my life.

 Cooper  Author

Now I'm even more glad that Thomas is dead.

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