

Chapter 45

I pleaded, Tristan thought, horrified. He didn't plead. Tristan demanded, he took. How had Alex done this to him? How hadn't he been able to strike him, to stop him? He looked down at the human, sprawled on the floor. He was going to kill him. He was done with this.

The woman raised the wrench over her head, gripped in two hands, eyes fixed on Alex with a snarl on her face.

"No!" He batted the wrench out of her hands, sending her staggering back. He grabbed her by the neck and pulled her off the floor. "How dare you," he growled. "How dare you hurt him? No one hurts him." She was going to die for this.

But he'd wanted him dead.

Hadn't he?

Alex didn't move, a small pool of blood forming by his head, his clothing soaked in more of it, some of which had to be his, by all the cuts on his body. He might still die; he was no longer infected. All he had to do was nothing, and Alex would die.

Alex would die.

He threw the woman next to him. "Fix him."

She coughed, rubbing her neck. He kept glaring at her, and when she finally looked at him, she was afraid. Good, she should be.

"I'm not a doctor."

"I don't care," he growled.

She sat and threw her hands in the air. "Just wait. He's going to get better. Everyone here is going to get better."

"He won't." Tristan seethed. "I gave him the anti-virus."

"I thought that was for you." She looked at Alex, confusion on her face.

"I gave it to him," he said through clenched teeth, using each word as a hammer to pound Alex into goo. Tristan growled. When she didn't react, he reached for her. She bolted with a yelp. He readied himself to chase her, but she only went to the wall, unhooked an emergency kit, and came back.

She opened it, looked in, and took vials and bandages out. She looked at Tristan, motioned for him to help, but he didn't move. He couldn't move.

If he wanted Alex dead, why had he ordered her to save him? Why didn't he just kill her and let Alex die? Didn't he want him out of his life forever?

She pushed Alex on his side, and the groan of pain sent ice through Tristan. He wanted her to hurry, to tell him Alex would be fine. She injected him with something and he almost stopped her, terrified she'd come up with a way to re-infect him, but he saw the symbol on the vial: Heal All. She sealed the wound on his head

and looked at the rest of him.

She shook her head and stood. "I can't do anything else here." Tristan glared at her. "This kit isn't enough. Have you looked at him? I'm going to need gallons of sterilized water to clean his wounds. Not to say that the only way I'll know if he has internal damage is with a medical bed. He needs to go to the medical bay."

He kept looking at her. When she didn't move, he pointed to the door. "Then get going."

She looked at the unconscious Alex, then back to Tristan. "Aren't you going to help?"

"No," he growled. "Go."

She took a step back and looked around. Not finding whatever she was looking for, she rummaged through the kit and found a set of straps. Shaking her head, she put one around Alex's shoulders, the other around hers. She connected them and began pulling him away, the strain evident.

"What the fuck do you even want?" she grumbled once she was by the door, probably thinking he couldn't hear her.

What *did* he want?

With Alex out of his sight, he could relax. Finally, he was out of Tristan's life. He no longer had to think about him. He could stop worrying about him.

He could still die, he thought, trying to make himself look forward to that moment.

He was almost out of engineering when he stopped himself. He didn't care. He wanted Alex to die. If he lived, it didn't matter to him.

"I will not be undone by him!" he yelled. "Do you hear me? He means nothing to me!" He forced himself to stalk back deeper into the room. One of the men on the floor stirred. Tristan slammed his foot down on his neck. Two more men were waking as Tristan made his way to his quarry. He found a gun he liked. Not an Azeru, but a Dolfic handheld. And shot them both in the head.

Another one moved as Tristan reached him, but he couldn't simply shoot him again. Well, he could, but it wouldn't be as satisfying. After all, he was the one responsible for all this.

Tristan crouched before him. The man no longer showed any of the injuries Tristan had inflicted on him while he was dead. He smiled maliciously. Now he would have him feel the pain he'd inflicted on Alex.

"Wake up." Tristan shook his quarry. "I said wake up!"

The man startled awake, opened his eyes and tried to get away, but Tristan held him.

"There you go." He smiled as he pulled his arm back. "Time for you to pay." He punched the man in the face.

* * *