

The End is only the Beginning

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Kapitel 7: Wounded

Chapter 7: Wounded

It was already dark when Kagome arrived at the castle of the West. She couldn't make out much but it seemed rather large. It must have a nice view too, because judging by the smell, the ocean was nearby. Unfortunately, Kagome did not have time to explore the place as she was shoved inside almost as soon as Ah-Un touched the ground. Jakken dragged her through a maze of corridors with impeccably polished hardwood floors, lined by beautifully painted shoji screens. Servants jumped out of their way and bowed politely, though the surprise on their faces was clearly visible. After a few turns they arrived at an intricately carved wooden door. Kagome could make out huge dog demons in their true form before a grim-looking sentinel opened them for her and Jakken. The doors closed and the young miko found herself in a dimly lit corridor with only a few shoji screens indicating rooms. Everything looked very old and extremely expensive. The screens were thick and the paint on them glistened in bright colors, at some places there was even gold paint. Realization sunk in. Those were Sesshoumaru's rooms. Before she could get too nervous, Kagome felt Jakken tugging on the hakama of her miko outfit. His voice was uncharacteristically muted.

"This is his lordship's bedchamber. I will wait here. Heal him."

Before Kagome could even start to protest, Jakken had opened the screen they were standing in front of, shoved her inside and slid it shut again.

The room was lit by lamps that spread warm light over the scene before her. In the middle of the big, exquisitely furnished room was a large futon and on the futon lay the unmoving form of the Lord of the West. Kagome could see immediately why Jakken had hurried her so much. The entire front of Sesshoumaru's haori was red with blood. It was the blood that shook Kagome out of her daze and sent her into motion. She had done this before when a villager had been attacked by a wild boar. Quickly, she spotted a basin with water and some sheets she could use to wipe the blood off him. With the basin and cloths beside her, she knelt down next to the taiyoukai and reached out to remove his haori. Before she could touch him, however, she felt her wrist being almost crushed by the grip of a large, claw tipped hand. She hadn't seen him move at all.

Barely suppressing a scream, she looked into Sesshoumaru's eyes. They were not their

usual, cool gold but a vicious blood red. At the same time, a low growl filled the room. She had never heard him growl before and she was sure she didn't want to repeat the experience. Ever. It frightened her in a primal, instinctive way and sent shivers all over her spine, the only reason she was not fleeing was her wrist that was still in the taiyoukai's iron grip.

"S... Sesshoumaru? It's me, Kagome... the miko that traveled with Inuyasha. I'm here to help you. So... could you let go of me? Please?"

Kagome tried to keep her voice low and soothing. Judging by the color of his eyes, Sesshoumaru was beyond reason, only responding to his animalistic instincts. Now she knew also why Jakken and the other servants kept their distance from their stick lord. If she got out of there alive, she would definitely kill Jakken. Nothing happened for some moments, then, as if a string had been severed, Sesshoumaru's hand dropped back on the futon and his eyes closed. His breathing was even shallower than before. Kagome let out a deep breath.

"Thank you. Now let me do my job and don't you die on me, mister."

She pulled at the sticky silk to expose his naked torso and froze. Because of the blood there was not much to see and she could not make out where the wound was so she grabbed a wet cloth. But before she could start cleaning him, she realized what she was about to do. This was no villager. This was Sesshoumaru. His entire being screamed 'Do Not Touch Me'. Yes, she had always wondered what was beneath those white silk clothes but now that she was about to find out, she felt extremely uncomfortable. If he were conscious he would have never allowed her to touch him. She should probably count herself lucky that he hadn't ripped her hand off earlier.

'Focus, Higurashi! If you don't touch him, he's going to die.'

Right. The voice in her head that sounded suspiciously similar to Kaede gave her the courage to continue. With flaming red cheeks she placed the cloth on Sesshoumaru's chest and started wiping.

Oh gods.

It was as she always had suspected. And much better. His torso was all hard muscle, yet nothing was bulging. The lines between his muscles were defined perfectly and created a picture of pure elegance and strength and masculinity. Kagome was so engrossed in her task that she almost missed the wound over his heart. Praying to the gods for success, she put a slightly sweaty palm over it and closed her eyes to concentrate. A few moments later, she found the foreign reiki. It took her another minute to figure out the barrier but when she had, it was easy enough to dissolve it. She was eternally grateful for Kaede's teachings.

Satisfied, she reached for her satchel and took out her needle and some string. She did not want to wait for the wound to close on its own since her patient had already lost so much blood. It would be hard enough for his body to compensate for that. Kaede had shown her only once before how to sew skin but she figured that no

matter how clumsy her stitches were, they would not leave scars on Sesshoumaru's ... absolutely beautiful... body. Fortunately, he did not wake up during the procedure.

After cleaning the wound again, just to be safe in case there was something like demon bacteria, she resumed rinsing the blood off to make sure there were no other wounds. Instead, she found that the stripes on his wrists and cheeks were not the only ones he had. There were twin stripes that started above his hip bones and sloped down to disappear beneath his hakama.

Biting her lip, Kagome put the cloth down and stood up. She should not be here, staring at this ethereal creature. Sesshoumaru would wake up soon and be his usual, arrogant, icy self and she should probably be long gone by then because he probably wouldn't take too kindly to her sewing his ... perfect, smooth ... skin like a piece of leather. Clutching her belongings, she slid open the shoji screen only to be met by Jakken's questioning eyes. She nodded tiredly and the green toad hurried quickly inside his master's bed chamber to make sure he really was healed. He returned with a relieved expression in his face.

"You will remain here, human, until his lordship is well enough to awaken."

Kagome did not protest. It was late and she was tired. Sleeping in a castle would be a nice change after her rather simple hut and besides that, she might have to tend to her patient again and she did not want to be dragged out of the village by Jakken again.