

Chapter 0146

“We’re going to be late to meet Delta Kyle.” I say over my shoulder to no one in particular. “Are we walking together or not?”

I don’t get an answer as Kaley grabs their attention again. “Should Marnie, Jeanie and I meet you at the packhouse Saturday for the ball or are you boys going to come and pick us up? I’m sure Daddy can arrange a car to take us all, that probably would be best to really showcase our arrival.”

I roll my eyes again and start walking faster. As often as they have told Sierra and I that they have shut those three down, clearly they aren’t doing a good enough job. I don’t want to hear their lameass answers, diplomatic and vague replies are clearly not working, not if there is any opening for interpretation. Those three girls only hear what they want, I’m over the back and forth and passive aggressive tiptoeing around her. They are going to have to learn to make solid decisions, even if they make some people mad. That’s part of being a leader, do what’s right and best for the majority, not everyone will be happy about it. Make decisions and deal with the outcome that plays out.

Sierra and I walk into the training grounds surrounded by a bunch of our peers. Delta Kyle is at the front of the group ready to give instructions.

“We are going to be pairing you up with a current patrol warrior. This will allow us to give our warriors much needed rest and you all a chance to learn tracking and surveillance skills. For those of you still in school, we have done our best to not interfere with that, but you may need to arrive late or leave early. We have already spoken to your teachers if that is the case and only those who are excelling in their studies will get that privilege. Patrol is not an excuse to be lazy, your homework and classwork is still expected to be complete and on time. As we are almost into the summer, we will rotate the patrols and your partners on a monthly basis. That will also allow us to account for those of you traveling for training and school outside the pack. If you have questions, ask your warrior partner first then come find me. The list will be on the training announcement board. Take a good look, some of you start training tonight.”

There was no direct dismissal from him, but we all took our cue to line up and see when our shift was. Waiting in comfortable silence, the guys roll in looking, if it was possible, more irritated than they

have been all day. They head over to Delta Kyle and talk to him briefly before turning around to leave again, with no notice of Sierra or I.

Sierra huffs. "Just go with them." I say trying not to sound defeated. "You need to spend time with Sam. This whole situation is stupid and neither of you should be caught up in it. I will have Delta Kyle take me back to my house." Knowing the argument that is about to come out of her mouth.

"They will kill me once they find out I left you here alone, even if it is with the Delta. I'm not dealing with that. I will just meet up with him in a little bit... After I make sure you get home and can tell them that I honestly did." I rolled my eyes at her, but I'm done arguing, this protection detail is getting tiresome.

"Fine, let's get our assignments and then you can go console your suddenly moody boyfriend." I try to lighten the mood.

"Not my boyfriend, my mate is the only one that will get any kind of title." She smiles and winks at me.

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“Whatever you say.” I smile back at her.

It doesn’t take long for us to get to the front of the line. “They split us up, how dare they?” Sierra lets out mock indignation. “At least I don’t have to get up in the middle of the night. You have fun with that.”

“You act like I don’t do that already. I have to report at 4 which is my usual time to get up, the only problem is I will miss morning training.”

“I’m sure that was by design, based on the last couple of days with the guys. Don’t think any of this has gone unnoticed by all your parents. I think they are hoping the separation will be beneficial for you all to at least concentrate on what you are supposed to be doing. I don’t know if you noticed, but none of us are in your group time.”

I had noticed and unfortunately I felt a surge of excitement to do something without them, followed by a sense of sadness followed by guilt at not being disappointed. I didn’t say any of that though. “Let’s go to the Beta house, so you can give your not-boyfriend some attention.”

We start walking. “Not home?” She asks cautiously.

“No, it’s never been home, it’s the Beta’s house, which is currently my father and then will be my brother and his family. The woods are my home, even the room Luna Ava gave me at the packhouse is more home than what I grew up in. It just doesn’t feel right to go to the packhouse right now. I need that separation. I have to figure out what to do with myself when all six of you leave this summer anyway, might as well get used to it now.”

“So this might get me in trouble, but what about the dance this weekend?” She cringes at me.

“What about it?”

“You’re still coming right? You promised to go with me since it will be my first and probably my last. But I wasn’t sure how you felt now that things are also strained...” She trailed off, but I understand what she is asking me.

“I will go with you and for you. You have been an amazing friend to me and don’t deserve all the crap you’ve been thrown in the middle of. I will be on my best behavior with the guys and I promise to not start any fights with them. I will not hesitate to finish a fight or leave if they start sh*t though.” I giggle at

her, and just to make her day I add, “I will even let you do whatever you want with my hair and make-up.”

“YES! This is why I love you!”

We made it to my father’s house in record time and headed towards the back after checking thoroughly that the guys weren’t lingering. Once I was safely inside I waved Sierra off to go meet up with Sam at the packhouse.

I did all my usual things, homework, shower, read and then lay on my bed and stared at the ceiling. Not being able to train alone was awful. Sometime after the sun went down, there was a knock on my door. As usual, I didn’t answer.

“Skylar? Sky, I have food out here. I know you didn’t eat lunch and I have no idea if you’ve eaten today or not. I have to go run my patrol shift. I guess I’ll see you at school tomorrow when you’re done with yours. I love you. I hope you know that.” I heard Mateo sigh then retreating footsteps.