



Chapter 0197

"There's a lot she needs to work on. I evaluated her ropes course this morning, and she barely survived it. Are we sure she should even be here?" Audrina chimes in. I notice Warrior Osiston is nowhere near hearing distance.

"Why did you assess her? Her ropes course was already documented and I don't recall assigning that task to you or anyone else." He looks sternly at her and I want nothing to do with this conversation.

"None of the warriors saw her assessment. How was I supposed to know that it had been completed? Usually the floor leaders run the assessments and the whole compound witnesses." She shrugs.

"So you chose to assess me at five in the morning with no witnesses to right that wrong? Good to know." I look at her and Warrior Nickolas raises his eyebrows and looks between the two of us.

"Really Audrina?" He just stares at her.

"She isn't at all of the training, so I utilized the time I had. She's too young and green to be here, so young her training load had to be lightened. I needed to know what I was going to be forced to work with. She's on my floor and a part of my team and I don't need anyone holding us back."



A low grumble comes from his chest. He clearly doesn't like being told what to do by a trainee. His eyes go vacant for a minute while he mindlinks with someone.

"Gather up!" Warrior Osiston's deep gravelly voice thundered around the group.

I can tell this is not something normally done as everyone is looking around while they are tentatively moving as a mass towards him.

"Apparently some of you like to run your mouths and question authority. You are given the information you need to go about your business and become a better warrior that the Alpha King can rely on. You are not privy to all information at all times and you do not have the right to all information at all times. At any given time a third of you have orders that do not coincide with the rest of the team. Get over yourselves, do what is asked or you can go back to wherever you came from if you really need to be nosy nellies. Now get to your next session. Skylar you stay with me, apparently you've already done your ropes course for the day." Warrior Osiston starts to walk off and there is a whole lot of murmuring of what that was about.



So much for not gossiping. I caught up to Warrior Osiston. "I can do the course again. I don't want anyone else thinking I'm getting special treatment. That seems to be the consensus. That and I apparently had to sleep with people to get here."

"You don't have to prove anything to anyone, Little One. You're new and it's rare that anyone comes in this late to training. You will be of interest to most of them for a couple weeks, then you will just be one of the trainees."

"I want to train with my group, if that's an option. I have to learn to trust these people, even the less than helpful ones, and they have to learn to work with me. I'm not trying to prove anything, not really, not like that. I have to prove myself to be accepted here, it's the only way."

"If you say so, let's go." He changes direction and heads towards the ropes course. Once we get there he looks over at me. "So, normally, we break down the ropes obstacles and do different team building exercises. Today we are working the bridges."

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"So do I work by myself or pick a group?"

"You work with the people on your floor." I snap my head to him. "It's both men and women. This is a large group exercise for when we do larger evacuations. And unfortunately there have been far too many of those in recent history. Yes, the floor leaders are in charge of the exercise." He answers my unasked question.

Perfect.

I walk over to where Audrina and the rest of our floor is standing waiting to get on the course. In the light of day and not in the middle of running the course I can see different rope ladders and access points to each part of the course. So I can actually come out here and take the time to figure out each course piece, that is when I get the time. I look forward to that.

"Hey Newbie, up here with me." A very large guy standing next to Wyatt calls over to me.

"Put her in the back where she belongs. Then she can't hold us up." Audrina throws over her shoulder at him.

"That's the dumbest thing I have ever heard. First, we don't put newbies in the back especially when we don't know all of their skills. Second, this newbie happens to be the most

agile person on ropes I have ever seen and should be one of the first people to go. You weren't at trials, you didn't see what her skills were at all, be petty and judgy later. We need to complete this course in record time, I'm done losing to Jack and his crew by seconds." He must be the male lead on our floor for Audrina to not have a snarky response to him informing her I'm good at something.

"Whatever, if we lose this challenge because she's here, I'm going to blame you and you both can do the punishment together for the whole team."

"Suits me." Tall guy says. "Name's John, but everyone calls me 'Tracker.' We have to get all 20 of us across and down in the shortest amount of time. We have been doing training drills for a few weeks, stick close to me, you seem to read the room pretty well. Any suggestions, I'll take them, but watch first to gather intel."

"Got it." I ignore Audrina, the best I can. She's on my team and eventually we are going to be forced to work together, but at least for now, there are so many people and she is in her element of being in charge and verbalizing her game plan. I do not matter enough for her attention since Tracker seems to have taken me under his wing. Unfortunately, listening to her, I understand why she's in her position. She's at least smart and knows what she's doing.

As a group we scale these small metal pegs hammered into the uprights. The pegs are so tiny, even my feet are going to

have a hard time fitting quickly. I don't know how Wyatt, Tracker and some of these other guys are going to manage to move up quickly. From there we are scaling across the rope bridge that has a single rope for feet and single rope for hands and the bars in between to keep them about seven feet apart. If we had children with us on the evacuation, there is no way any of us would choose this bridge style. I say as much to Tracker.

"Do we assume we have children or elderly in these exercises? Or so we assume everyone can traverse this setup since it wouldn't be practical for those demographics?" I ask the back of Tracker's head while our group moves forward.

"We should always assume the worst case scenario, that means children, elderly, sick, injured, every type of person we could come across. Why do you ask?"

"In a real life situation, there is no way one of us is going to set a bridge like this, even in the worst situation, if we have children or injured people, they are going to need to be carried across. I am the smallest person here and I have done this alone twice this week and I can barely touch both ropes at the same time, that makes me slower. An untrained person would be worse and whatever we were evacuating from would probably capture or kill us. Do we go single file or can the rope handle more than one at a time?"