## Chapter 0209

I wake up feeling just a bit lighter and I want to talk to Sierra about what Lillian said at dinner. I've never actually talked about my scars to anyone or what they could possibly mean. I race to get ready and head down to the kitchen to grab a snack from Stella.

I'm actually excited for school, which is a first. I normally would take training over sitting in a classroom any day, but I really want to see her. It feels like forever and I need to talk to someone about anything other than training, but especially about yesterday and everything with Audrina.

I skip the golf cart and just walk to the school. I left with plenty of time not wanting to run into Audrina in the morning. School gave me almost an entire day without her and I would take advantage of that wholeheartedly.

I walk up to the old building, still in awe of the structure, head in and toward my locker. Before I can even finish getting my things together Sierra runs up behind me and hugs me around the neck.

"Man, I miss seeing you everyday! There has got to be a way that I can see you more often, this is terrible."

"I am allowed to have people over to study. I just have to get the days and times cleared first, but that would be great though." I turn and hug her back. "And I have news for you." I gave her the quick version of Luna Anne's letter and told her I would send her pictures of all the dresses I tried on so she could help me choose. We debated whether I would see Xander at the dress fitting or not since all of the guys were supposed to be at training.

She said she hasn't heard from Sam since I was released from the hospital and the Luna Queen let her call the guys and let them know that I was okay. That is my only reservation about being here, the isolation from my friends. Even though I would have been kept from them anyway while they were training, there's only lasted through the end of the summer, mine was going to be years.

"I wonder if you could write to them?" Sierra muses as we reach her classroom. "At the very least you should be able to write to your brother. That way you could check in, I'm sure they miss you too and are worried. You had just barely started talking to them again when you were attacked."

"Ugh, don't remind me. I feel terrible about the way I treated them and then we were all just separated."

"Don't you feel bad about that! They deserved it and karma decided to give them a real kick when you were attacked and then whisked away in the middle of the night. None of us even got to see you. You were just gone."

"Really? I don't remember any of that. I remember the beating loud and clear and then I woke up in the Royal Pack hospital. Nothing in between. Osiston had to tell me how long I was unconscious. Your parents did a ton of tests on me, but wouldn't really say what they were doing or why. I really should talk to them about what they were looking for."

"They didn't say anything to me. It was all really quiet actually, now that you say something. But we aren't talking about that right now. Tell me more about your meeting with the Luna Queen, what do you think she will have for you?"

We spent the rest of lunch talking about dresses and what happens at the conference. I could care less about dresses and was trying to formulate a plan to get Sierra to this dress fitting with me, her and Luna Anne could go nuts and I would just stand there like their life sized Barbie doll. I also wanted to just hang out with my friend. We aren't in any classes together and I just see her in passing. I bet Luna Anne would be alright with it though, I just don't know how to reach out to her. Can I just write a letter and hand it to someone? That seems weird, but probably my best bet. I'll have to remember to ask Nickolas today when I get back to the bunk house.

"She should put you in burgundy." I am pulled out of my thoughts back to Sierra's dress musings.

"Why burgundy?"

"Jewel tones are your friend, girl." Sierra's friend Renee says as if that should be common knowledge. I guess stuff like that is to them. "You could actually get away with wearing

just about any color. Your blonde hair picks up every tone and you are so tan, I'm jealous by the way, every color would just be highlighted."

"I can't believe you get to escort Alpha Prince Xander. I heard he has refused to take a date to any function for like the last three years." Molly chimes in. I have learned that she is good for accurate gossip. She loves the drama, but does her homework and digs down to the root of all the things being spread around. It doesn't hurt that her doll face just invites you in and she genuinely listens to everything people say to her. "How did you get so lucky?"

"Not sure really. We are friends and I'm here in the pack now so it would be convenient. I'm also a warrior so it's an added layer of protection for him since he is starting to train and learn the Alpha King's role. I'm sure there are plenty of vipers out there trying to get his attention or force a chosen mate connection. It's kind of sad really. He doesn't always know who his real friends are and who just wants to be near him because of his title."

"And you just want to be his friend?" Renee asks, skeptical.

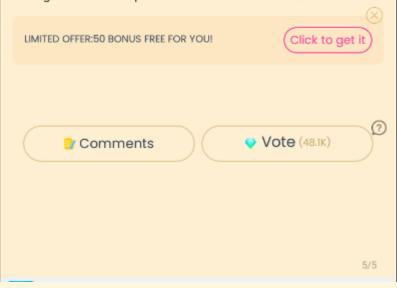
"Of course. I have never been the boy crazy type, so anyone who isn't my mate really doesn't interest me like that."

"Are you kidding? Have you seen that boy, er, man? He is huge and drop dead gorgeous. Are you telling me you have never thought about what it would be like to be with him?" Molly sputters.



"No, not really. I mean he is very handsome, anyone with eyeballs can see that. He is actually fun to talk to and just hang out with though. I have had the opportunity to do that, but I don't think I could be his mate. She would have to be someone impressive to handle all the different packs in their needs and wants. The Luna Queen's job is so hard, I don't think I would be cut out for that. So nothing else really matters, right?"

"You are far better than I ever could be. If he gave me the chance I would jump him in a heartbeat and not regret a second." Renee has us all laughing now and we finish the rest of lunch speculating on all things Prince Xander. It has been so long since I have felt this light and free of worry or anxiety. I am glad that Alpha Reggie made me continue with school. Nickolas was right, there are just teenage things I need to experience before I commit to adulthood.



## Chapter 0210

I walk back to the bunkhouse with a plan to ask Osiston if I can have regular study time with Sierra on the weekends. I don't know what training looks like, but I have to have some time set aside to get the work done if they want me to actually finish school.

I really like my classes in this 'fast track' they have me on. Battle strategies has got to be my favorite. I have never had better conversations with teachers before and so far all of them encourage different ideas and perspectives. I spend more time debating the validity of battles and wars in our history than I do paperwork and I feel like I retain so much more of the information having to dive deep like this. We also talk about what we would do to protect our pack as a warrior in each given situation or how we would change a strategy to make it more effective.

The kids in my classes are mostly Juniors and Seniors and they are really smart. They don't treat me like a little kid, even though I am three years younger than some of them. They trust the judgment of the people who placed me here and just accept it. It's the craziest concept I have ever encountered.

Dinner was uneventful, thank the Goddess and Lillian fully agrees with Sierra and Renee's thoughts on burgundy dresses, They all really need to meet. The boys chose to ignore us, dressing up was probably as high on their priority list as it was mine. I have no choice though, if the Luna Queen asked me to wear a paper sack that's what I would do.

Audrina didn't bother me during training Friday, in fact she acted like I was not even there which made a few of the team challenges difficult and we lost all of them, not by much, but we lost which I am coming to understand is something that rarely happens. She is taking whatever grudge too far and I have no idea what I can do about it, since I have no idea what I did to her.

Maybe it is the hero worship thing she has for Warrior Osiston, but the other trainers talk to me just as much as he does, since I am still in an 'observation period' according to them. I still don't know what they could be observing on day three. We are doing similar things each day, there isn't much more to observe. But I do all of the team training now, so I'm lost as to what I can do to make the team dynamic better. If it was just her and me I wouldn't give a sh\*t, but this is affecting the whole team and at some point they are going to retaliate on her or me or both of us and I don't want to be part of that responsibility.

I will just add that to the list of things I need to ask about when I finally get a chance to talk to Warrior Osiston. I haven't actually seen him all day today, but working with warriors it's like a revolving door of assignments, so who knows, maybe he's working for the Alpha King. Thinking that

makes me feel stupid for wanting to sit and gossip with the guy. There is no way he wants to chit chat with a fifteen year old girl about school and the drama of a teammate not liking her.

Ugh, now I don't want to say anything, but I was also specifically told to speak up about things happening to me. What the hell am I supposed to do?

It's been a long time since I had a terrible sleep. Especially with the way that we train. I am usually out like a light as soon as my head touches the pillow and a little groggy in the morning while I'm still getting used to the schedule. I really hope I acclimate a little faster, this sleep deprivation feeling is terrible. But I can't stop thinking about what to do about Audrina and her behavior towards me and meeting with Luna Anne. I'm not nervous about going to the Royal Packhouse, not really, Luna Anne is great, but I also don't want to do or say anything to embarrass her either. I was not brought up to do all of the political schmoozing, that was my brother's job as the next Beta. What if there are other people there that I have to impress? Or if this is some kind of test to see if I can blend in while protecting the Luna Queen? The thoughts just kept spinning in my head and made it hard to get to sleep and then stay asleep.

When I finally got out of bed, I changed quickly and went downstairs to try and grab an early breakfast. I didn't establish Saturdays with Stella and Jack, but I figured checking it out wouldn't be a terrible thing. When I walk into the canteen a couple other people are here, no one has food yet, but clearly they either just came off a shift or are getting ready to head out and want to be first to get food. No sooner did I think of it then the kitchen Omegas started coming out with trays on trays of food to set on the buffet.

We get a late start on Saturdays and Sundays, because the trainers aren't complete barbarians. We get to start at 7am, breakfast is served at 5:30 to give us a little more time to eat and digest before we start. It was so generous of the trainers, I think sarcastically and laugh a little to myself before I remember that this is why we are all here, to train. The rest of these warriors have no other responsibilities, so I guess it makes sense. They need to keep warriors busy otherwise they get into and cause trouble. I should know, I spent the last year with the guys. That thought makes me smile too.

