

Chapter 0225

"But I just want to train like everyone else, I don't care about being in charge or a leader, I'm new here, no one in their right mind would follow me with my lack of training."

"And that, Little One, is where you are wrong. You have already proven to many of them you know how to lead, especially in a tense situation. You stay calm and objective. Your friends Lillian, Wyatt and Nathaniel can attest to that already. The rest of the warriors are not stupid. Each has taken their turn as lead, everyone has to be ready to at all times. For some it's difficult to step into that role, but you do it effortlessly."

"If you say so. I'm always afraid of making a mistake and getting someone hurt."

"When you lead, that is always a possibility." He shrugs and I just look at him incredulously. He was supposed to say something fatherly like 'you would never do that to someone' but no, he had to go and be honest with me. "What? Would you prefer I lie to you? You are a leader, born to be a leader. It's not all rainbows and sunshine. People will get hurt or suffer on your watch and you have to be able to both cope with and then handle it. You also have to learn that you cannot save everyone. Some people are destined to hurt themselves no matter what you do to help them." I just nod. It makes sense logically, but in real life I have a feeling it will

be easier said than done, which is why he's telling me.


We make it inside and Alpha Reggie leads me to the dining hall which is situated on the main level we just walk in from the massive patio. The dining hall is super formal and everything is exactly as you would picture it from a fairytale. With murals well maintained and taking up entire walls, fancy framework around everything and a hint of gold accents make each surface shiny and fancy looking. The hall is huge and could easily fit several hundred people, but down at the far end is a lone table set under a stained glass window for the five of us with Luna Anne, Xander and Sierra in animated conversation. Sierra notices me first.

"There you are, I thought maybe you left without saying goodbye. It's been hours, what have you been doing?"

I look to Alpha Reggie for an explanation that would satisfy her curiosity, but wouldn't be me outright lying to my friend.

"We were going over the details of her assignment, naturally there are several layers to what she has to do. Unfortunately working with and for the Royal family has its levels of complications." She just nods. Well played, It was a very detailed answer that actually wasn't an answer. I was going to have to pay close attention to how Alpha Reggie interacted with people, he was really good at this.

We ate and joked and there was no more talk of what my job was. At about seven Sierra got a summons from her parents. She gave me a huge hug and told me she would

 +15 BONUS

see me on Tuesday and expected a study schedule.

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Chapter 0226

Once she was gone, Xander turned to me. "Well, dad said he was going to give you all the news. You seem to still be breathing so it didn't shock you too bad." He laughed at me.

"Being your cousin wasn't the most shocking part of that whole story, really." I laughed back. "The magical powers and poison immunity, that will take some getting used to though. Do the Elders know? Or will they put me in the pool of potential mates to throw at Xander on a regular basis?"

"I actually would prefer it if they kept throwing you my way. It prevents them from setting me up with some of the others." He shudders at the thought and I have to suppress a giggle.

"Why do they keep trying to set Xander up? Didn't you say the Alpha King is only at his strongest with his Goddess given mate?" I look at each of them in turn, confused by the idea now that it came up. You would think that the Elders would want their Alpha King at his strongest in order to protect and lead the packs.

"Some are of the opinion that the way the Moon Goddess goes about making us find our mates is asking too much and that our mates should be more accessible." Luna Anne begins.

"Meaning they are lazy and don't want to put in the effort."

Xander chimes in and I agree with him completely. Part of finding your mate is becoming a strong enough person on your own without them so you can be better with them.

"Also, some of them take that line of thinking a step further, believing that being from the same pack, specifically Royal pack members having mates from the Royal pack would be better." Alpha Reggie adds.

"Bringing in an elitist attitude." Xander translates again and I can't help but smile. I see where his mind has gone with this. It's pack separation and some being viewed as better than others rather than pack unity amongst them all. I nod my head agreeing with Xander on this point.

"But, we can't come right out and accuse anyone of that though." Alpha Reggie's tone is light and conversational, but it also has an undertone of caution. "Well I think that Skylar has enough to think about for the time being and she should probably get back before her team leader finds something else to criticize." He raises his eyebrow at me and I just roll my eyes and smile.

"I'll go with her dad, I want to talk about next weekend." Xander stands with me and I give Luna Anne a hug and turn to Alpha Reggie not really sure if he's the hugging type.

"Come here." He opens his arms and just like with Alpha Lucas, I'm overwhelmed with the thought that this is what it feels like to have a dad hug me. A simple gesture, taken for granted by so many, but it means the world to me and I try

to let him know that without words. He gives me a little extra squeeze before letting me go.

Xander and I walk back out the way we came, although this time he lets me actually walk and enjoy the grandeur of the castle. All the cream white walls and fancy humongous pictures of people and times in history I will have to ask about later. We head down the stairs and out to the car where Barty is waiting for us.

"Would you mind if we had some privacy Barty?" I have no idea what that means, but Barty doesn't hesitate and opens the door for us to get in the back and then he joins the driver in the front right before the privacy window goes up. Ah, now I get it, but why?

Xander waits until we are on the road and moving consistently before turning to me. "This is for you. From your brother and the rest of the guys." My eyes go wide as he hands me five envelopes, each one sealed with no writing on the outside.