

Chapter 0302

The first real party I have ever been too is the most overwhelming, overstimulating, over s*xualized thing I have ever seen. Clearly the goal is to be the most underdressed in the middle of winter while looking like a porn star ready to mate with the first jock that comes your way. 2

I know it's more than either of us anticipated when Mina slows her walk up the long winding sidewalk in front of this stark white mansion that's size could rival my packhouse.


"Holy sh*t there are a lot of people here." She gasps as she starts walking forward again. The loud music drew us in.

"How are we supposed to find Beth and all the girls in this chaos?"

"No idea, but I assume everyone is glued to their phones. From what I understand this is more about being seen and having photos posted of you on social media, than anything else. Being here is a privilege, being able to prove it is harder." She winks at me over her shoulder.

It's been a while since she has talked in a strategic tone. I was afraid I was losing my friend to the glamors of the outside world.

Turns out she was doing her part in her own way. I was never going to get close to these people. I'm too young for



them in general and I really could care less to socialize outside of my friend group unless someone approaches me. I guess I could put more effort into this part. We need to know who these rogues are and they clearly know how to hide in plain sight.

Speaking of coming up to me, a guy I recognize as one of Beth's friends, maybe someone's brother, approaching us.

"Hey! You made it! I wasn't sure if you two would show. It's been a while, what have you two been up to?" He boops my nose and smiles a lazy smile, clearly feeling his drinks already.

"Well. We finally moved! So we are closer to campus. I can't wait to start school in a couple weeks." Mina giggles at him.

"Yeah, the storm made everything take way longer than we thought it would. Does that happen a lot around here? Random snow storms at the wrong time of the year?" I ask, surprising Mina and myself at my initiative to start a conversation. 1

He wraps an arm around each of us and starts to lead us through the entryway of the massive house. "Sometimes, not super often though. We usually get snow during your standard winter months. Being by the ocean helps that, but we are not here to talk about the weather. We are here to celebrate the new year. Are you ladies ready for your first UMaine party?"

"Yes!" We both laugh and shout together.

I still don't know this kid's name, but he has introduced us to so many people. I don't think learning names is a part of the game. Be seen, Mina said, people need to know we were here. That's what I am currently trying to do. I have been nursing a drink since we got here. Every twenty minutes or so I put it down as we pass by tables or any flat surface really. I have to pretend to keep drinking, but I need my brain to function too. Mina told me over the mindlink after her first full drink, that's what she is doing too.

"Oh, my gosh! Hi!!" Mina jumps at some random guy taking a selfie with a few other, let's be honest, hot guys and wraps her arms around his neck like I would if it was Xander. He doesn't even blink, just pulls her close and, in tandem, I follow along for the picture. We took a few from different angles and each guy took his turn wrapping us up in their arms.

We have been in more selfies and group shots than I ever would have expected. But we fit whatever demographic these guys find attractive so it's working in our favor. Hopefully we will be on enough socials to get noticed by these rogues. I'm glad none of the guys have pushed further than gentle groping though, so it's been bearable. I don't know how many of these parties I can do. I'm more exhausted talking to all of these people than I would be doing 12 hours of training straight.

"It's almost time! The clock is starting to count down."

Someone shouts from further in the house. Mina grabs my hand and pulls me into the living room that seems to be housing everyone in front of the movie theater sized TV. We push up towards the front, because being short makes that a necessity for me.

I can feel the heat of all of the bodies around me. Wafts of perfume and deodorant in various phases of wearing out assault my nose. Combine that with the stale alcohol and the left over smoke from w**d and I was having a hard time focusing on the ball dropping in front of me let alone what was happening around me.

"5..4..3..2..1!" A cacophony of noise erupts and loud music starts blaring. People around us are making out like crazy. Mina is wrapped up in a guy next to me and before I can even comprehend what is happening, lips are smashed against mine.

My eyes close tight of their own accord and my assailant either has no idea what he is doing or is so drunk, he has no idea what he is doing, but I feel like he is trying to eat my face. I crush my lips closed as his tongue licks my face like a dog. I don't even know if he realizes I'm not reciprocating the slobber assault. I have no idea how long it lasts, but eventually he pulls away just far enough to look into my eyes with a lazy and satisfied look. I try to smile back, hoping I can pull off faking enjoyment for him. I think even without

the brand suppressing my hormones and romantic emotions, I could not have enjoyed that less. He looks very pleased with himself so I must have convinced him a little bit.

It took me a little bit to untangle myself from him. He even tried to follow me into the bathroom, apparently whatever I said was code for 'quickie' and I finally had to reach out to Mina over the mindlink to come and rescue me. I thought I was actually going to have to fight him off. Even when I pretended to be more into Mina than him, he thought we should just have a threesome. We finally just turned around and walked away too fast for him to grab my arm and hold me back again. I don't know if any other story will ever top that one.

I had to pretend to be a normal human girl with normal human strength and I found it both funny and annoying. I can't imagine not being able to defend myself when a guy was really trying to harm me. At least this guy seemed nice, just a little over eager and I didn't want to hurt him. That was a new technique I decided I needed to train. How to put enough force into extracting myself from situations like that, but not do so much damage that anyone would be suspicious of my non-human strength.



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We didn't get any traction from our new years party stunt, but we were noticed on campus. I was able to get a job at the coffee shop on campus so I had an excuse for being around so often since I was supposed to still be in high school. Mina still hates school, but she is at least exempt from doing double classwork while she is undercover at college. The only thing is I am helping her do most of her work while still completing my own. A point I being up to Nickolas again this morning. 1

"If she is exempt, surely there is a way to do the same for me. Doing both sets of homework is cutting into my training and research time. Gentry gave me several books to look through so I can help try to find out how the rogues are doing the mass scent masking." I roll my eyes after working through some of Mina's math homework. It's not that she's dumb at all or can't do the work, but math and science she struggles with and we can't afford for her to fail classes. All of her other core classes she is flying through. She has also been helping with the masking research. Doc Sylvia sent over all the books she could find about different herbs, salves, plants of any kind that might have been used in history to accomplish the masking that we have found. Unfortunately it seems like there is some kind of combination of things being used, but every time we present something that theoretically makes sense, Gentry punches

holes straight through it. Spells that take days or months to produce or that would require too much energy from the caster to maintain, plants and herbs that would need to be grown and brewed or burned regularly doesn't seem feasible.

There is something we are missing, but we are close, I can feel it. There are more male wolves on campus now and many smell like rogues. Not all rogues are bad, but most rogues are rogues because they have been cast out of their pack for doing something really bad or they are kids of rogues and haven't been accepted into or tried to become a pack member. Some just prefer to be alone. Which seems so strange to me. Wolves are pack animals and almost need to be together to survive, but I can't judge anyone. I was a loner inside my pack for most of my life. The problem I have with the situation is that they actually have a scent. I'm not sure if we are being played or if these might not be the guys we are looking for.

We continue to go to parties and any big social event on campus. I really enjoy basketball and hockey games. I can at least appreciate the athletes dedication to their sports. This also makes it easier to socialize at their parties, the guys seem to love a girl who is interested in talking about them and their sports. It makes it way too easy for Mina and I to stroke egos and get information. I have also found, the more that I talk the less I have to actually drink. I can just pretend to take sips and then talk a ton with my hands effectively sloshing liquid on the floor like the rest of the girls traipsing through.



From talking to people at the coffee shop on campus, I got a job so I had a reason to hang around so much, it sounds like many of the new guys came in for the agriculture and forestry program, which has all of us suspicious. They are rogues here to do something and they are way too close to the Alpha King and his territory for it to be coincidence. Mina and I have been trying to find and spend more time with these people, but they are not the standard college party kind of guys so we are having to improvise.

"I said No. How many other ways do I need to say 'no' before you understand that no actually means no?" Nickolas is fuming around the kitchen. It's his turn to cook tonight and Mina is trying and failing to convince him to let me enroll in the early college program. I can start in late February and it would be a great cover to get me into the forestry program and right in with the new rogues.

"Nickolas, please. This is the only way to start to put the pieces together. I can be right in with them. We are all wolves and will more than likely end up on projects together. It's the perfect reason to hang out since they are not doing the normal college thing." I try to be soft and logical.

"Don't look at me like that, Skylar. Your cute little pouty face is not going to win this argument." He shuts his eyes and takes in a deep breath.

"You never call me 'Skylar.' Are you mad that I want to do

this?" My face falls naturally at the thought that he thinks I might not be able to pull this off. Then I remember he said he has a bad feeling and his wolf has him convinced Mina and I are important, so I pout a little more to lay it on thick. I am going to win this argument and he knows it, that's why he pulled out my first name, it's his last ditch effort to make me see how dangerous this could be.

"It's not that, you are more than capable of handling yourself." He takes a deep breath again and huffs it out. I can't see or protect you inside the classroom. At least at the coffee shop I can be around and there are only two blind spots that are always covered when you're on shift. And I can't pose as a student with you since I am already set up as your uncle." He grunts into his hands, scrubbing them up and down his face. He abandoned cooking a while ago. "I hate everything about this plan, which probably means that you're both right."

Mina and I both sit in anticipation, hoping he is coming around. It is torture waiting for him to make a decision, which makes me think he is mindlinking someone to get an okay, which I both appreciate that he is now open to the idea and it irritates me that I have to get permission from him and headquarters and probably Alpha Reggie himself before he finally nods.

"Fine, you're in. But, we have to go over some ground rules and we need to do a perimeter check so we know all ways in and out of the buildings you will be in.