

## Chapter 0429

3-2

"Excuse you! You have been along for almost every round of trouble, missy, shut it. I also know Nathaniel is watching so I use the tech to my advantage. I'm sure he has eyes on us now because I get the feeling we are the only ones who have seen any action at all and he's bored as f\*ck."

"Obsessed much?" Oliver snipes from behind me.

"Jealous much?" I quip back.

"I don't know your team and the idea of some guy watching and recording you all the time sounds sketchy to me."

"Eww. When you say it like that, yeah."

It was a quiet drive after that. Thank the Goddess it didn't take too much longer to reach the SUV.

"Midge, I'll take the keys and follow."

"It's okay we can both go. I don't think Jena is going to leave her hostage any time soon." I look out the back window at my friend.

"Although watching her yell at your brother this whole time has been entertaining. I didn't know we could even have sexual tension with these brands on, but I can feel it through the window from here." I smiled at Lil's comment, but looked back at my brother and my friend again. Huh, it does remind me of when Sierra and Sam first started hanging

out. I'm going to have to pay close attention.

Lillian goes to jump out of the car and I move to go with her, but Dakota stops me. I look at him confused.

"Stay, Oliver can go with Lillian and make sure she gets to the packhouse." 1

"But, I..."

"No, stay, please." The look in his eyes was somewhere between pleading and serious. "I want to talk to you."

This was going to happen sooner rather than later, but I figured I would be accosted by all the guys at the same time, not have to individually talk to them about leaving and avoiding contact.

I nod, "Okay, I'll stay, but I have to get out to give her the keys." I don't give him time to think. I climb over and jump out. The keys are tucked into the back of one of my leg pockets. I pull them out and hand them to Lil. "Stay close, the terrain gets a little choppy around this area."

"You act like I don't drive ever." She rolls her eyes.

"No" Jena shouts, "We don't let you drive because you suck at it. Good luck Oliver, I hope you don't get motion sick." Jena and I laugh, cause she isn't joking one bit. Of all the things Lil is good at, driving she never really mastered.

Oliver regarded me then swiped the keys from Lil's hands. "Hey! What the hell?"

"Since I know where I am going, this will guarantee that we

get there, and in one piece.” Jena and I start laughing again.

I follow Oliver and Lil to our SUV.

“Smalls, you said you would stay.” I forgot that these big ass guys could be such babies.

“Grabbing something, relax.” I head back to their truck and throw Jena her jacket and a blanket. “If you insist on riding back there you might as well try to be comfortable. It’s not going to be a short ride. Sleep while you can too. We’ve been up for almost 48 hours.”

“Yes, ma’am.” She winks and I stick my tongue out at her before I climb back in the truck.

I notice Sam is messing with something in the back and then sits down next to my brother.

“Did you kick him out? What is so bad that you can’t talk to me in front of the rest of the guys?”

“Is it so bad that we just want you to ourselves, Smalls?”

“That’s fine, just not normal.” I hesitate.

“A lot has changed since you left Tiny.

“Like what?”

“Not as attached at the hip as we were. We all have jobs to do now. The full transition starts when we turn 18.” That was all Cam said. That’s not cryptic at all. “Now do you want to tell us what really happened the night you left?”

“Honestly, no. It’s something I have been working on

forgetting. And before you all try to force me. I'd rather tell all of you at the same time so I only have to relive it once. It was one of the worst experiences and I have grown a lot since then." 1

"We can see that." Dakota tries to lighten the mood a bit by giving me a once over. I shove him back with my shoulder.

"Thank you for the gear. I really do love it. You guys seem to always know what I need. Thank you for the necklace for my birthday. I was really surprised, I didn't think you all would remember..."

"How could we forget your birthday Tiny? You are too important to forget something like that." I just nod again and look down at my hands. "We just wish you would have reached out, let us know you were okay, anything. We were right there, more than once. Xander gave us one letter and that was all the response to each of our letters to you."

"You know I wasn't allowed to..."

"That's bullsh\*t and you know it." Cam's harsh words make me look up at him. "We were able to get things to you and we know that you are everybody's favorite. I bet Warrior Brogen would have hand delivered a letter if you asked him to."

"Stop! I am not the favorite, and I'm tired of double standards all the time. I didn't want to, okay! I have been the weak little sister, the weak second born Beta my whole life. Then everything revolved around my attachment to you guys. I was noticed because of you guys and Sierra being my friends. I was only seen as good at fighting because of

you guys. Not because of my own talents or hard work. I needed this for me." My tone is getting higher as I talk. "I was always going to go to training no matter how many tantrums you threw. How I got there sucked ass, but I got there and have done nothing but bust my ass."

"Just answer this, because Alpha Reggie flat out refused to even talk about it. When you were captured and imprisoned for a month." He took a deep breath and let it out harshly. There's that growl again. "Yes we know about your capture, and no, Alpha Reggie did not want us to know about it, but dad thought our reaction would have been worse if it was kept from us. Did he, did they, did that asshole touch you, while he had you? From what we got of your friend Jena's story, there was a lot of mistreatment of the women who were captured." He almost choked on the words.

"No." I whisper and close my eyes. "Not me." I look behind me out the window at Jena. "But I witnessed more than I wanted to, but it's not my story to tell."

Cam's shoulders relaxed a bit and his anger seemed to simmer down a bit. I lean on his shoulder and reach for Dakota's hand.

"I'm okay, and for now I'm home, can you work with that? I promise we'll talk, some stuff is just hard and I don't want to say it more than once." He huffs, reaches for my hand and laces our fingers together, keeping his gaze forward and the other hand on the wheel.

The rest of the drive was silent. There was no way I was going to be able to have any more conversation with them

right now. Emotions were too high. Apparently me leaving was still a point of contention. Even when my intentions were very clear. Maybe after we have been here a couple days and my returning stops being a new novelty we can talk, until then I have to keep my focus on the job. Mike and the Rogue King are the target, the top priority.


I am dozing on and off as we drive about an hour and a half before we get to the stretch of land that connects the island to the mainland. Once we cross it will be another half hour until we get to the packhouse.

A realization hits me suddenly. "Does your mom know I'm coming? Should I link her?"

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