

Chapter 0433

3-5

"Really?! Of all the things we could do, you want me to play capture the flag?"

"Actually, I thought they could play against all of you and see how a team works together. That is something this group is struggling with. Everyone wants to be the hero and they are starting to plateau working individually."

"You guys in?" I look at my friends and I know their answers before they say anything. We all smile at each other.

"What are the rules? What do we get when we win?" Jena asks and Lil and I both laugh.

"Basically the kids put a flag out and you all have to get it without being tagged by them and get it back to the starting line. Sky here still holds the record for the fastest time. No one can seem to beat it, although Sam has come the closest. That is now the bragging point, who gets the closest." He laughs and we join in. He turns and starts walking toward the groups of kids working with the guys and some of the other highschoolers I recognize, but don't really know names of. I can't tell if the guys don't notice me because they are focused on the kids or if they are ignoring me, but none of them look our way until Kyle shouts.

"Listen up!!" All the commotion comes to a halt. "We have a treat for you today, Sky is visiting and has a break from her

current mission, so she and her team are going to work you over a bit. Let's see if you can survive a game of capture the flag." Many of the kids cheer and wave at me. I love that some of them remember me and are at least excited to see me. The guys are all in their varying states of emotions. Sam waves enthusiastically, Mateo's wave is more subdued. Oliver is just looking anywhere but at me and the twins are blank. I have no idea what they are thinking. 1

"You expect us to go up against Elite Warriors? Are you crazy?" A boy, maybe a couple years younger than me complains.

"Why not?" Lil asks. "You are here to train and get better, not be comfortable and complacent. The only way to get better is to go up against people who are better than you, have a skill that is better than yours, or work with people who have been training longer. Always be learning, don't whine about the effort of getting better, just do the things that make you better." Lil is in training mode now. She is one of our best trainers, she just isn't old enough to be an instructor yet. She should be a floor leader and a team lead, but she says she doesn't want those positions. I don't miss the looks on my guys' faces at her comment though. They must tell this kid off a lot too.

"That is the mentality of an Elite Warrior." Kyle says proudly pointing to Lil. "Now let's break you up into groups to go against their team."

Kyle starts moving around and pairing up groups so there are an even amount of kids. This looks like our middle school aged kids so the ages and abilities are going to be

interesting since many of them are probably in the middle of growth spurts. This is always such a weird age to work with because of that.

"You have your teams, work with your upperclassmen to come up with a plan. You have five minutes." He walks back over to us. "Let's see how creative they get since it's against you. Don't go easy on them either, they need to see what real competition looks like. Many of the upperclassmen struggle with harming them during training. No one wants to hurt a child and I feel like the idea that they are weak due to their size or age is actually hurting them more. You are my biggest case in point. For whatever reason you are the smallest wolf I have ever seen, and I don't think you are growing any more, Little One, but you are one of the most skilled warriors to come from our pack. These kids need a push, just like our boys did years ago. It's why they do this now, Why they still train just as hard as when you trained them. They saw how it improved them, but I also think they do it to feel closer to you. This was your thing, your project to improve the pack and they refused to let it die when you left." 2

I just blink, tears are threatening behind my eyes, but I refuse to let them fall. I feel like my emotions are on overdrive being home, or maybe being this close to the guys again I can't stuff them down like I do when I am away.

"Hey, Bitty, you good?" Oliver walks up to me rubbing his chest. I can see the looks of my friends from the corners of my eyes. I just walk into his massive chest and wrap my arms around him, taking in a deep calming breath. This is

something I have missed. "I'm still mad at you." He wraps his arms around me and squeezes tight."

"I know, I'm a terrible friend, I'm sorry." I squeeze tighter.

"Not good enough, but we'll get to that later." He lets me go and walks back to his group.

"What was all that about?" Jena asks.

"He can feel my emotions, he just knows when I'm upset. The connection has saved me more than once."

"Really? Have you two always been like that?"

"No, it was after I got my wolf and we really started to hang out. It kind of developed, the more we hung out the more he could feel my emotions. He's most attuned to sadness and fear emotions." I shrugged my shoulders.

"And he's going to be your Gamma?" Lil asks. 2

"Yeah, why?"

"Looks like a mate thing to me, just curious."

"Not a mate thing, I don't think. Neither of us do. We have talked about it before, when, well that story is too long for right now, but he somehow could sense me having a panic attack from somewhere else in the packhouse and was able to find me based on our connection. But my brother, Sam and the twins have the same ability to calm me that he does. It's something with our group."

"You ladies ready?" Delta Kyle calls over to us.

We look at each other and shrug. None of us even talked about a plan of attack for this game. "Ready as we'll ever be I guess." Jena laughs.

"Midge, you call the shots. This is your game and your pack, you know them best."

"Got it. The flag is on the top of the rope climb. They are probably really good at that now, but it's their go-to spot to place the flag. No different than trials Lil. Don't underestimate how f*cking fast these kids are, especially with a challenge. Get off the ground as quickly as possible. It's harder for them to herd us that way and we are faster in the air. Split right away, I'll go down the center and throw them off. We need to mess with their heads a bit, confuse them. Meet you at the top.

"Got it Boss." They both call back not looking at me.

We have perfected the art of talking over the mindlink while paying attention to others.

"3...2...1...Go!" Kyle calls out.