

Chapter 0101

I stood up to get a better viewpoint. “The clearings are obviously serving some sort of purpose, meaning pack members are here, but there is so much space that a trained person would probably be able to get past undetected. I would run patrol patterns in an arc and have two groups of two or four running the same path, just running opposite each other, that way no one area is unprotected for long. If you are having rogue attacks regularly, I would have patrol check in every hour, but from a different point in their path to keep communication open and minds sharp, especially at night. If there are specific paths in or out of the territory, I would have those monitored too, it’s easy to keep your bearings if there is a road or river to follow. I would also use motion sensors that can be monitored at the packhouse or other central location. More than one set of eyes is always better.”

I look up to see Alpha Lucas smiling his gentle smile, the one he wears when he is in ‘dad mode,’ Luna Ava and Luna Queen Anne look impressed, but not surprised.

“Is that right? I feel like I am being tested right now and you are all making me anxious.”

The Alpha King is the one who responds first. “Very impressive my dear. And you have no training in border security or patrols?”

“No, sir. Only the little we have started studying in battle classes.”

“Bah! None of this ‘sir’ stuff. Alpha Reggie to you. And you seem to have a natural eye and realistic notion for what is needed. Let me ask you this, what would you do if you were protecting the Luna in an attack on this territory?”


“Where is the attack coming from, sir?” He looks at me, eyebrows pressed together. My eyes go wide, unsure of what I did to earn that look for a moment, then it dawns on me. “Sorry, Alpha Reggie.”

“Let’s say multidirectional attack. One from the mountains, one from the east entrance and one from the west just beyond the lake.”

“Does the packhouse have a safe room?” I ask without looking up from the ‘map’ made of glasses, bottles, napkins and phones on the table, making a mental picture for myself.

“Let’s say no safe room.”

“I would have the Luna suppress her Aura and shift,



we would run up the middle, trying to avoid the attacks from the East and West. Most Lunas would want to stay and fight or care for their pack, but keeping her safe keeps the pack fighting. She can keep morale boosted via the mind link as long as she is in range on the territory. If her aura is suppressed then it will take longer for the rogues to find her, giving warriors time to fend off the attack. More than likely, if the Luna is the target, the attackers will check the packhouse first and look for a safe room for her to be holed up in, that will also buy time if there is a rumor of a safe room planted.

“What if there is an actual safe room?”

“I would hope that it has two exits, like a rabbit hole, otherwise they can just sit on it, keeping her hostage and wait for her to need food and water. I would also hope it's built into the mountain, giving you options for exits. If your architect was skilled it could be a tunnel system that needs to be navigated like a maze to find.” I’m just letting my imagination run wild now. “You could also have more than one option for an exit with the maze system. It could also double to protect non-warriors of the pack in any type of emergency if food was stored and you could locate a source of clean water. It could be a place to keep your pack safe or as an evacuation point.” I look up smiling



at all of the possibilities.

“Well now, I’m going to have to see how creative my architect can be.” Alpha Reggie chuckled at me.

“Wait, What?”

“This is the basic make up of the Royal territory and you, my dear, have picked apart our entire protective strategy. Your fan club back there has spent the last two summers here at the training grounds.” He points to a clearing close to the lake and I think of the picture in Kota’s room. I take a breath and then my eyes go wide and I can’t utter words. Did I offend him? Did I just embarrass myself?

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Chapter 0102

“Don’t look like that. You didn’t say anything wrong, but as you said having a fresh set of eyes always brings new light. Sometimes we get so familiar with things we don’t actually see them. Like you mentioning only one exit in the safe room. It seems common sense to have multiple exit points the way you said it, but no one else thought of it. We have always put focus on the outer border, and that has worked just fine. I’m not so full of myself as to think I have all the answers all of the time. So thank you for your insight my dear.” He smiles at me and I can’t help but smile back. “Well this has been a very enlightening evening, but we are off to bed. My patrols have joined yours, so just let someone know if you plan on coming or going in the wee hours of the night.” He looks right at me and winks. ①

“Nope,” I jump at the voice behind me. “Tiny has no plans in the morning. Goodnight sir.” Cam says, then reaches for my hand, something none of them have ever done. I take it and stand, saying a quick goodnight to everyone while letting Cam lead me and the rest of our group inside.

Just before we cross into the kitchen I hear Alpha

Reggie ask, "Do they always flank her like that?"

"Uh, huh, and I don't even think they realize that they are doing it..." I didn't hear the rest of Alpha Lucas' comment as we made our way.

We head up the main staircase, Cam is not letting go of my hand under any circumstances.

"Hey, Skylar." We stop just before the door to the third floor and turn around to see Prince Xander right behind our group. "Can I walk you to your room?"

"She stays on the third floor." Kota responds a little curtly.

"Oh, okay. Um, who are you sitting with during the trials tomorrow?"

"Don't." I whisper to the guys as Cam's hand tightens around mine. To Prince Xander. "I'm not sitting with anyone tomorrow." He looked confused, so I decided to elaborate. "I'm joining the trials, so I will be on the ground with the warriors. I'm not really the sit-in-the-stands-and-watch type." I just keep the conversation going as if we aren't being eavesdropped on by all of my friends. "We'll see you tomorrow for breakfast." I smile at him and place my hand on his forearm for a brief second. I do like him and had fun talking to someone other than my usual

guys. He really is very handsome, but I just don't have that same pull I have with the guys. It would be nice to be on friendly terms with the Alpha Prince though. "Goodnight Prince Xander." I smile one more time and turn back to the door before anything else embarrassing happens tonight.

Kota lets us in the stairwell and we all file up. "Man, I am beat. What time do we have to have Little Bit down to the training grounds?" Sam asks from somewhere behind me, breaking the silence.

"Warriors arrive at 10 and the trials start at noon." Cam calls back. "Oh and Tiny, Delta Kyle wanted me to tell you, that you are not allowed anywhere near the training grounds before 9:30, so you are hereby forced to sleep in and lay around, no matter what time you get up." A soft chuckle runs through him.

"So, what do I do when my body decides 4am is the time I need to be up? I will go nuts, just sitting around waiting for the rest of you to come out of your comas." I ask a little flippantly.

"Come find one of us and we will snuggle you back to sleep." Oliver whispers in my ear and it gives me goosebumps, but I'm not sure if it's a good or a bad thing.

“Alright, Tiny has her room officially now, someone can crash in Kota’s room, two of you on the couch and Sierra, you can decide who you’re spooning with tonight.” Cam laughs again.

“Where is Kota going to sleep?” I asked after doing the math in my head.

“We usually share.” The twins say in unison.

“We don’t spend many nights apart, never have.” Kota explains. Now I know why I was able to sleep in his room then.

“Okay, goodnight boys, Sierra.” I say before turning towards my room. It’s so crazy to think I have a room in the packhouse.

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