

Chapter 0334

I took the gifts with me when I went back to the castle for a meet up of the battle strategists. I finally got to see Xander and he promised to deliver them for me when he went to visit Blue Crescent next. He said he might make it for the boys' annual combined party. It's weird to be sad about missing a party I have only attended once, but I miss my guys and I find myself wondering what they are doing without me. Probably the same thing they were doing before Sierra had us crashing into their lives.

The strategists were going over the information that we gathered and what other teams have been bringing in on separate assignments. Each of them asked me different questions, getting clarity on anything that might move them forward, but it was really just the same information over and over again. We also went over the safe room project and I got to see how that was coming along with Luna Anne. It was really neat to see an idea that started as napkins and bottles on a table come to life. She told me that Luna Ava and Alpha Lucas came for a visit and were sad to miss me, but their visit just didn't match up with my schedule and the guys stayed behind to man the pack while they were gone. I guess they have been doing that more and more lately. Stepping into jobs and tasks that allow them to transition into their roles as true leaders of our pack.

I hope Sam told them I was doing okay and not that I was out doing dangerous things, but knowing him, he probably called them on his drive home that night and exaggerated the whole thing. They don't keep secrets from each other, so it would have just been a matter of time before they all found out I was on a mission and have my warrior brand. I mean there's really nothing any of them can do about it, but I still hate the thought of them worrying about or being angry with me. 2

I didn't see any of the Elders while I was at the castle and thank the Goddess for that, because I am terrible at hiding my irritation with people and there is no way I would have been able to sit by without doing or saying something to Elder Bastian even though we still don't have proof of his involvement with the destruction of Tyler's pack. I can't stand the guy in general.

Although discussing it with Xander, he said Mina and I might be on a list of chosen mates the Elders were overheard discussing a few weeks back. We had a great laugh about that before I went back to campus.

The spring has just been a mix of classes, hanging with the rogues and small gatherings at the castle. Then rinse and repeat. Osiston and Nickolas have both said that most missions are long term, especially when you are just gathering information. Getting in with the right groups or with the right people takes time and can't be forced.

When my birthday rolls around it is bittersweet. Mina was not going to let me ignore it and even got Tyler in on the plan to do something. But as I was having breakfast that morning I found myself thinking of the guys and wondering if they were together thinking of me. I have been wearing my bracelets since I bought theirs, it feels like an invisible connection to them that I just need. I decided to have them all attached to a leather strap with snaps so they are all together all the time and it covers my forearm like an archery arm guard.

Mina, Tyler and Mike took me out for dinner and it was fun, but not the same as being at the pool grilling out. I did laugh and enjoy myself and even got a burger which everyone thought was an odd choice. Before we left, Mina pulled a box out of her purse and I was immediately suspicious.

"What's this?" I ask, gingerly taking the blue velvet box from her. It's a decent size, not a ring or bracelet, but definitely jewelry of some kind.

Tyler and Mike look confused at my lack of enthusiasm at receiving a gift, but if it's what I think it might be, they might be angry.

I was given strict instructions to give it to you after dinner and while, and I quote, the stalker is present. She mindlinks me and my eyes go wide.