

Chapter 19: Respect

Warren

Fucking Brady is attacking again. His warriors have to be as exhausted as mine are, but here he is, attacking again. The asshole.

I'm not sure how he knows that I'm injured, but I'm definitely the target of this attack. While my warriors may have one wolf each attacking them, I have multiple wolves, constantly attacking me, trying to take me down. Each time one of my warriors goes out, the attacking wolf joins the attack on me.

At first, I was able to keep up, killing them as fast as they were attacking me. But my warriors are too exhausted, run down, and now, I'm sure, not healing as they should because of my previous fucking doctor.

As I face off against Brady, I feel a wolf bite down on my broken leg that hasn't healed and was reinjured when I shifted. Arric howls in pain before turning and ripping half of the face off the wolf who bit us. That's when Charlie entered the fight with me. He'd leaped over me, putting himself between me and the other wolves, including Brady.

'CHARLIE, NO!' I yelled in the mind link, but it was too late. The group of them had attacked him viciously. I had struggled to get them off of him, especially since more kept coming. Finally, other warriors jumped in, but by then, Charlie was unconscious, his wolf pulling the shift back to his human form. He was covered with blood, more his own than others.

'Get him to the hospital!' I command and several warriors shift and begin racing my Beta to the hospital. Unfortunately, I know it's too late for Charlie. No one will be in the hospital because the battle isn't over yet.

As I continue to fight, I feel a change in my pack. I have no idea where the awe or pride is coming from, but I don't have time to wonder about it. Brady finally calls a retreat of what's left of his pack. This time, I don't follow him. I can't afford to lose any more of my warriors and I can't afford to go down. With Charlie out, I'm going to struggle as it is to keep the pack whole. I'm honestly surprised that I haven't felt his tether break yet.

I order the patrols to make sure all of Brady's wolves are off our pack lands and as the sun begins to rise, I run to the pack hospital to see if I can save Charlie.

When I get there, I understand immediately where the awe and pride are coming from. My mate is something to behold. I watch her on the gurney, pumping Charlie's heart, yelling at him that he's not allowed to die on her, and giving commands to the others. I watch her leap into the air as Savannah shocks Charlie's heart. I turn and see everyone watching her, watching her fight to save their Beta. The feeling of pride that I felt before is blossoming now. No one has ever seen Dr. Stevens fight this hard to save us. And this is their Luna. Whether she accepts it or not, it's exactly what she is. 2

I turn back to her when I hear the paddle thump again and I watch as Charlie's heart begins to beat. My heart soars when I hear her tell him that it's about time he listened to her, his Luna. It may not be

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conscious, but she's accepting her place, her role, in this pack and she's doing it in front of everyone. It's nearly as powerful as if she'd claimed me publicly.

"She's magnificent," Arric purrs.

"Yes she is," I say as she turns and sees us. I watch her eyes narrow and I just know about to get some of the fire I see in her eyes. Damn, I can't wait until I see that fire in the bedroom. Magnificent indeed.

I don't even care that she's berating me in front of the pack members. She's my mate, the only one who I'll allow to do it. When Arric refuses to allow Haynes to pick him up, that fire flashes in her eyes and she stalks toward us. It's such a contrast to the woman who came into our bedroom last night that I can do nothing but marvel at her. I'm so desperate to kiss her that Arric does it for me, licking her face and taking some of the ire out of her. I hear some of the warriors snicker but it cuts off before she can catch them.

I know she's right about my leg so I don't argue about getting on the gurney, but I can't show weakness in front of the warriors. I may have several injuries, but the worst is my leg and Arric is strong enough to leap with three legs.

As she orders my pack to behave and turns to go save my Beta, I turn to look at Haynes.

"I'm staying here," I tell him in the mind link.

"Yes, Alpha."

"Who can give me a report?" I ask, opening the mind link to the group.

"Which report do you want, Alpha? The one about how many of us our Luna probably saved today, or the one about the litany of things she had to say about us and her pack?" one of my warriors says and as I watch, the entire group of them smiles. I'm not sure I've ever seen my pack smile. Maybe one or two, like at the birth of their child or when someone finds their mate. But as I look around, my entire pack is smiling, chuckling at their Luna's mutterings.

'Injury report first, then I want to hear what our Luna has to say about us,' I tell them in the mind link, settling onto the gurney. I turn one ear to the room with Charlie, listening to Yara muttering to herself and giving Savannah instructions about where and how to stitch Charlie up. It's Haynes who gives me the report.

"I didn't realize how many of us were losing our wolves, Alpha. I thought it was only me. But most of us are getting injured so much because our wolves are weak. I can tell you, in just the twelve hours since our Luna treated me, I feel stronger than I have in weeks, months even," he says.

"I was one of the first to come in today, Alpha, and if it wasn't for our Luna, I'm not sure I'd be ready to fight again right now. But because of her assistance, my wolf was able to heal me and I'm ready to go back out. And because he didn't have to expend all his energy healing me, even he feels stronger," another warrior says.

"I just came in before Beta Charlie, Alpha, but I'm already starting to heal. It's the fastest I can ever remember healing," another warrior says.

I look around the room and every one of my warriors is nodding,

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showing me their wounds that have already or are in the process of healing - healing cleanly, no jagged edges, no openings that may cause infection. If they scar at all, it will be minimal.

I'm just about to ask them to tell me of Yara's mutterings when Dr. Stevens walks in as if he owns the place. Everyone goes quiet and he looks around, before zeroing in on Piper.

"I'll take over from here, young lady." Does he not even know her name?

"I'm sorry, Dr. Stevens. Dr. Yara left me in charge while she operates on Beta Charlie," she says, standing her ground. I'm impressed, but I also think that this has something to do with Yara empowering her nurses in a way that Dr. Stevens never did.

"Excuse me? You have no authority in this hospital..." he begins, but I leap off the gurney and begin stalking toward him with a menacing growl. I'm not sure if he didn't notice me on the gurney against the wall, or if he thought I wouldn't intervene. Either way, he was foolish.

'I've told you that Yara is the lead doctor in this hospital, Dr. Stevens. Not only are you not welcome here, but I have serious doubts about your ability to provide medical care to my warriors. Somehow, in just one day, your Luna has made more of an impact on these wolves than you have in years,' I say, keeping the mind link open so everyone can hear me. They need to know that I'm serious about Yara being in charge here.

"Don't be ridiculous. That child is barely out of undergraduate school ..." Arric's snarl is so loud that he shakes the walls of the hospital. I hear the door behind me slam open and I smell Yara's cinnamon and

nutmeg scent.

"Tell her to go take care of Charlie. I've got this," I say to Haynes. Yara obviously put him to work for her, so he can be my translator. I need to mark her so I can talk to her when I'm in this form.

I hear Haynes speaking quietly to Yara while Dr. Stevens watches. I growl again when he stares at her rather than facing me.

"You will not speak of my mate and your Luna like that again or it will be the last thing you do, Dr. Stevens. Your assistance is no longer needed in this hospital. Leave before I have the warriors escort you out." 2

Almost as one, the warriors push forward. Yara's made enough of an impression that they're ready to back her as their lead doctor and their Luna, rather than Dr. Stevens.

"This is a big mistake. As I said before, don't come crying to me when you someone dies," he snaps. 1

"Actually, doctor, if we've have had to wait for you, some of us would already be dead. While you were hiding in a safe room, our Luna was here, fighting for us," one of my warriors says. 1

"Yeah, Doc, so when it comes to feeling safe in the hands of one of our doctors, I'll take that child who is barely out of undergraduate school who already has me patched up and ready to fight again, over you, who would be pouring alcohol over my wounds because it takes too long to stitch me up," another says.

I watch as Dr. Stevens looks around, realizing that everyone here is

ready to fight for Yara.

"Fine. I guess I'll go then," he says, stomping out of the hospital.

'Follow him, make sure he doesn't do anything stupid,' I say to two of the warriors who look the healthiest.

They nod and walk out. I look around, waiting for everyone else to relax before chuffing at Piper to continue.

"Alpha. You'll want to get back on this gurney before our Luna catches you standing around. She already warned me that she'd make my ears bleed if I didn't listen to her. I have no doubt that she'll do the same to you," Haynes says.

I chuckle, hearing others chuckling behind me as Arric leaps back up onto the gurney.

'Now, tell me about our Luna,' I say, focusing in on Yara's work in the surgery room while letting the pack regale me with Yara's snarky commentary about my pack.



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