

Chapter 0010

“Would you get up!?”

I start awake to see Rafe’s face peering over the edge of the bunk, frowning at me. “Seriously, Ari! The bell rang like ten minutes ago – I have no idea how you’re still asleep!”

I glare at my brother a little, already in a bad mood, wondering how he’d feel if he got about two hours of sleep after getting the crap beat out of him the day before. Rafe rolls his eyes at me and hops down, getting ready for the day.

I was up for hours after I got back in bed last night, trying to figure out how I feel about all of this. At the core of me, I know that keeping my secret is the most important thing. But still...

Two mates, in the same place, at the same time! And me here by what feels like chance –

God, it’s almost like...fate or something.

I mean, our family does have a history of this sort of thing happening – mom and Aunt Cora’s mother is the Goddess, after all, and she definitely threw some twists into their lives. But still – it’s all just so...

bizarre.

I had almost drifted off to sleep again last night when the barrack door opened and a tall figure came in – his shoulders almost wide enough to fill the doorway itself. He'd moved slowly across the room in complete silence, but when he laid down in his bed his body language was...miserable.

Luca came in a little later, not bothering to be stealthy. He too had moved to his bed, but had paused for a second, looking towards my corner of the room.

I had hastily whipped my covers over my head, holding my breath, desperately praying that he wouldn't come over to me.

Because even though my wolf howls for him – for them? I am so not ready to face this. Not with everything that's at stake – and not with my enrollment at the Academy at risk, and certainly not with how...

Well, I blush to think of it, but how naïve I am about all of this boy stuff. I mean, I know that I was supposed to get married, but part of what I had thought was so appealing about Edward was that he didn't push me for anything more than a chaste kiss. Even though he revealed that he had other plans once we were married, I had thought that he would give me

the slow-burn romance I need.

But mate stuff?

From everything I've heard, it's like lightning.

And I am...not ready to be struck. I mean...am I?

"Seriously, Ari!" Rafe shouts, reaching out and grabbing the front of my uniform. I gasp as he hauls me off my pillow. "Get up! We have to get to breakfast in two minutes!"

"I'm already dressed, Rafe!" I snarl, batting his hand away and throwing my legs over the side of the bed. "I just have to put my shoes on -"

Rafe's eyes go wide and he grabs me again, hauling me down off the bed and bumping my body hard against the metal rails as he does. I give a shriek as I go down.

"Ari," my brother growls, holding me tight against him. "Where the fuck is your hat!?"

I gasp, my hand going to my head as I realize that my hair is still tied in a bun at the base of my head - not exactly spilling around my shoulders in a way that screams girl but certainly visible -

"It's on my bunk!" I squeak. Rafe glares at me and takes his own cap off, shoving it hard on my head

before jumping up to grab my cap. Then he grabs my boots off the floor, shoving them against my chest. “Put your shoes on, you idiot,” he growls, “and learn to be more careful!”

I’m blushing hard now as he pulls my cap onto his own head. I pull on my boots, not bothering to tie them before beginning to tuck my hair up beneath the brim of my cap.

“Heyyy cousinnnns,” Jesse says, coming over to beam at us way too cheerfully, clearly aware that there’s drama but ignoring it. “Did you guys sleep well?” He turns his wicked grin on me. “I had a really weird dream.”

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