

The Alpha Games

Chapter 4 - Drinking Games with old friends

“That bastard.” Jess growled.

Maddie cheered and downed another shot, though her numb lips didn't quite catch all the liquid and she had to wipe a dribble of tequila from her chin. She watched the blurred shape of her friend grimace as she downed her own, and then shakily topped up both of their glasses. The bottle spluttered out the last of its contents but the night was still young.

Aside from sending a curt mindlink to her father to explain the ball and her engagement had been called off, Jess' house was her first stop. They had barely seen each other in the past three years, but their childhood friendship had never died.

“I always hated him you know.”

“No you didn't.” Maddie crooked an eyebrow at her.

“True.” She grumbled. “But now I do! And his mother? If I meet that bitch, I'm going to give her a piece of my mind” Her growl dissolved into a hiccup as Maddie forced another shot down her neck.

Between their take-a-shot-every-time-Jess-swears game and the room full of Silver Moon wolves, who all welcomed her home with a drink, it had become a game of who could stay on the bar stool the longest. Maddie knew she was going to get chewed out the next morning by her father, for acting un-Luna-like, but for that night, she didn't care. She was among fellow wolves who shared in her happiness and anger.

The White Wolf wasn't the nicest pub on the territory, and certainly wasn't where the upper echelon chose to unwind, but that's what made it perfect. There, none of the patrons cared if their future Luna was getting plastered, especially on her birthday. The only warriors in there were the youngsters, who were still on a low paycheck, and the guards her father had placed on her the moment she arrived on the island. Maddie knew better than to try and shake them, but news seemed to have gotten around about her and Daniel, since they weren't reminding her about her duty every two minutes. She didn't

even know why they were there. She was on her home territory, for fuck's sake, it was the safest place she could be.

"We're going to need more alcohol." Maddie grumbled and jumped up. Jess didn't even try and flopped her head onto the table to wait for round four.

With a giggle, and a not-so-straight stride, Maddie danced over to the bar getting some cheers as she went. The bartender was already pulling a second bottle from the shelf, his grin wide as she pulled the right money and a huge tip from her pocket.

Just as she reached for the tequila, a hand snagged around her wrist. She stumbled a few steps into a solid chest, her free hand catching on an arm. A thick, well-muscled bicep tensed under her palm, but she was too disgruntled about being grabbed to care.

"What do you think you're..." She started as she looked up, and up, to meet the eyes of the person who had grabbed her. "Lewis?"

She narrowed her eyes on the man who vaguely looked like her friend, with three years added to the lines of his face. Her hand tightened around the bulge of his bicep, and she had to glance down at it to make sure it was actually his. Though she had managed to see Jess a few times over the past few years, she hadn't seen Lewis since the day her dad shipped her off to Red Dawn. Back then, he hadn't long since joined the warriors and, despite being the Beta's son, was struggling to keep up. Apparently, there was a big step up from the general training our fathers made us do compared to the warrior program.

Maddie took in his matured features but softened at their familiarity.

"Have you seen my sister?" He asked, eyes sweeping the pub, the disapproval in them ringing loud and clear. Clearly, more than his physique had changed in the last few years.

Maddie pointed to Jess, and she was pretty sure that she was passed out. Lewis grumbled and began dragging her over to his twin. She protested, trying to reach for her next bottle, but his grip was unrelenting.

"I think you've had enough." There was a low growl to his voice that made her eyebrows raise.

If focusing on him didn't make her head spin, she would've pointed out that it was *his* eighteen-year-old ass they had dragged out of there on his birthday, and it was *his* twenty-one year old ass who had danced on the bar the night before she left. Maddie had an arsenal of stories to use against him that ran back to when they were in nappies, but her tongue was thick in her mouth as she stumbled after him.

It took a lot of convincing on his part to get Jess up and moving, but Lewis was a well-practised machine at getting his sister to do what he wanted. Though they were obviously fraternal twins, the pair were the spit of each other. Well, they used to be before he hit some sort of growth spurt and gained fifty pounds of muscle. Maddie giggled at the squabbling pair as they all left the pub, and her entourage, behind to a chorus of goodbyes. Somethings didn't change and she thanked her lucky stars that they hadn't.

"So, you stuck with the warrior thing?" She asked as she slumped to the ground beside Lewis. Jess was throwing up in a bush and neither of them had the stomach to do more than tie her hair back.

"Yeah. I'm on track to take over from dad."

A light shined in his eyes that warmed her and she nudged against him. "That's great, Lu." Neither of their fathers were the easiest to please, but Maddie was glad at least one of them wasn't a disappointment. "Did my dad send you to come get me."

"Yeah." Green eyes, just like his sister's, peered down at her, more calculating than the last time she had seen them. "He's pretty pissed off."

"What was I meant to do? Stay with the cheating bastard?" She mumbled, letting her head fall to his arm. Her eyes slipped closed. Just like Jess, the distance and time hadn't squandered the friendship they had built, and she relished the feeling of familiarity between them.

"No." He sighed. "But maybe actually talk to your dad about cancelling the engagement and the pack merger before going on an all-day bender with my sister."

Maddie snorted. "I'm only twenty-five once. I'll put off getting chewed out until tomorrow. That can be my birthday present from him."

“Well.” Lewis jumped up, letting her fall to the grass. She glared at him, as her stomach churned at the quick movement and she had to wrap an arm around it to keep its contents down, but she couldn’t help but soften as he laughed. “Consider the warning a gift from me.”