

## Chapter Fifty-Seven: Whispers in the Wild

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Phera POV:

Well that was an absolute cluster-fuck! Instead of actually helping Josh just made the hard into fucking impossible with all the dodgey answers? Was there actually a third person in play? And if so, then who? The day was ending, painting the sky in shades of pink and orange. I was walking back to the pack, the familiar path feeling oddly eerie now after the mind scrabble Josh played. My heart felt heavy, a stark contrast to the usual lightness I carried after meeting with Josh. Despite the confusion, his words left a tangled mess in my thoughts.

As I strolled, the only sounds were my footsteps and the distant calls of the forest creatures beginning their songs. But then, something shifted. It wasn't loud, nor was it particularly menacing at first—just the slight rustle of leaves, a whisper against the natural harmony of the forest my wolf hearing pick up.. I tried to shake off the feeling, telling myself it was just the wind or a small animal scurrying. But the unease nestled in my stomach didn't fade.

The rustling continued, a subtle soundtrack to my growing apprehension. I couldn't pinpoint its source, and that uncertainty gnawed at me. My mind raced, considering whether to shift and run or stay human and rationalise my fears. That's when I decided to reach for my phone, thinking maybe now was definitely the time to face the music and call my mates. But just as my fingers brushed

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the cool metal, a shadow lunged from the underbrush.

A huge rogue, its fur matted and eyes wild with frenzy, stood before me. It was missing an ear, and foam dripped from its jowls like rabid hatred personified. The sight of it sent a jolt of fear through me, but also a rush of adrenaline. I knew I couldn't outrun it in my human form. Without a second thought, I let my instincts take over and shifted into my wolf form, a transformation that felt as natural as breathing yet fueled by desperation.

As my senses sharpened, the world became clearer, and I could smell the rank stench of the rogue—it reeked of decay and malice. I could hear the heavy breaths of three more approaching, a pack of rogues likely emboldened by their numbers. My heart pounded in my chest, not just with fear but with the determination to survive, to return to my mates, and safety of Red Moon. I was in deep shit the moment my mates and everyone else heard about this.

The first rogue lunged, and I dodged, using my smaller size to my advantage. I snapped my jaws, aiming for its neck, but it was faster than I anticipated. We tumbled, a whirl of fur and fangs, each trying to gain the upper hand. The other rogues circled, waiting for an opening, their growls a constant threat in the back of my mind.

I knew I had to end this quickly. With a powerful kick, I pushed the first rogue away and faced the next. It was a dance of life and death, each move critical, each breath a countdown. My heart ached for my mates, their names a silent prayer on my lips. I needed to survive this; I had too much to live for. I had finally decided to fulfil the bond with the triplet. No way in hell would I die right now.

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But as the fight dragged on, I realized the rogues weren't actually trying to kill more like they were trying to capture me. A streak of fear went down my spine and I tried linking anyone from the pack but I was out of range. Fuck! Karma was biting me in the ass for not telling anyone. For all the novels and movies I watch I sure was an absolute fucking idiot for telling anyone where I was. Each bite, each scratch I landed on those rogues was a message: I would not be intimidated, I would not be defeated.

The battle raged, and with each passing moment, I could feel my strength waning, but my resolve only grew stronger. I needed to get close enough to the borders help would come then. My mates would come

The fight seemed endless, a blur of movement, snarls, and the metallic scent of blood filling the air. I could feel the fatigue setting in, my muscles screaming for respite, but the thought of yielding, of showing weakness before these rogues, spurred me on. Their taunts, a cacophony of growls and snarls, were lost to the pounding of my heart in my ears, a relentless drum urging me to fight, to survive.

But then, in a moment that felt both fleeting and eternal, something changed. A sharp sting, so sudden and unexpected, pierced the nape of my neck. It was as if time slowed, my senses heightened to the point of agony. I could feel the poison, or whatever substance it was, coursing through my veins, a liquid fire ravaging my insides, dismantling my defences, tearing me apart from within.

The pain was indescribable, a searing, blistering torment that obliterated all other sensations. My vision blurred, the forest spinning wildly as my legs buckled beneath me. I

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could hear the triumphant howls of the rogues, but the sounds were distorted, as if underwater. My body, betraying my desperate will to stay upright, forced the shift back to my human form, leaving me naked, a transformation usually seamless, now a torturous molting of my very being. I curled up into myself not wanting the rogues to look at my body.

Naked and vulnerable, I lay writhing on the forest floor, the coarse leaves and twigs digging into my skin, a mockery of the battle I had just fought. The rogues, too, shifted back, their human forms grotesque in their nakedness and malice. They stood over me, their laughter a cruel symphony, their words laced with venom.

"Look at her, the mighty Phera," one sneered, his voice dripping with scorn. "Not so fierce now, are we?"

I wanted to respond, to unleash a barrage of colourful words, but fuck my body was a prison of pain, my voice a mere whisper against the roaring in my ears. I could only glare, my gaze burning with the last of my strength, a silent vow that this was not the end.


Then, through the haze of my torment, a figure emerged, a man with a presence so chilling it seemed to still the very air around us. He was tall, his build menacing, exuding an authority that even the rogues seemed to respect, their mocking tones silenced. His eyes found mine, and in them, I saw a darkness deeper than the night enveloping us. He was smiling, a twisted, knowing smirk that spoke of plans long in the making coming to fruition.


As the edges of my vision darkened, the last thing I saw was his face, etched into my memory, a promise of retribution, or perhaps a prelude to a nightmare yet to

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unfold. Then, everything went black, the world slipping away as I succumbed to the void, the man's sinister smile the last flicker of light in the encroaching darkness.

Shit! I had royally fucked up!

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