

Alpha's Hunt by Starlight Chapter 18

Chapter 18 You should brush your teeth

Elise's POV

I stare wide-eyed at the shiny metallic object Luke is holding out for me.

Mindlessly, very sure that I'm imagining things, I take the gun from him. The cold metal pressed against my palm, its weight causing me a little difficulty but it's enough to tell me this is happening.

"You said we should take the shortest path," Luke says, bringing me out of my thoughts "Then this is our solution."

"You're going to teach me how to shoot?" I ask breathlessly

Luke nods with a serious face "If you have any chance of surviving the shorter paths, you'll need all the firepower you can manage."

I look at the gun in my hands and then at Luke, willing myself to keep my face straight and act dignified.

I start squealing.

"Oh my moon, oh my moon!" I grin like a manic while rocking on my toes "This is happening!"

"What?" Luke looks at me like I'm a talking ferret

"You have no idea what this means to me," I fail to stop grinning "It's a long lost dream of mine to learn how to shoot."

"You? A shooter?" he raises his eyebrows

I know, I know. A short, talkative omega wishing to be a shooter. But you can't blame me, I was obsessed with cowboys.

"So how do we do this?" I ask eagerly

Luke starts explaining the proper way to hold a gun, to load it, how to put the safety on and how to use a silencer. I take in all the information, patiently waiting for when we'll move on to action shooting. We should've used a silencer before, but Luke only has three and whenever we've needed to use guns, we hadn't been fortunate to grab the ones who had the silencer on.

Finally, the magic words leave Luke's mouth;

"We should start practice now,"

I whoop as my hands shoot towards the sky, I whip out the gun from the waistband of my jeans shorts where I'd put them a moment ago.

"Stand straight, with your feet apart." Luke instructs "We don't have ammunition to waste so I put in pieces of cork.

They're lighter than the bullets, but they'll have to do."

I nod and do as I've been told, Luke's voice reaches me again "Keep your arms straight, one hand on the gun and the other supporting your wrist so it stays straight."

I aim at one of the trees directly in my line of sight and pull the trigger.

I stumble back from the impact, though only a small sound echoes in the air due to the silencer as the aluminum foil-clad cork flies towards the tree, the white material giving me a view of its path. It flies straight past my target.

"The hell!" I narrow my eyes at nothing in particular "It was supposed to hit the tree!"

"Of course I didn't hit home," Luke shakes his head "You stumbled back and your hands flew upward."

"How can I stop that from happening?" I ask

"Keep your feet firmly on the ground, maintain your stance."

I do as he said, putting all my strength in my limbs as I aim again. I stumble back nevertheless, the cork goes past the tree again.

"This is not working," Luke says, pinching the bridge of his nose

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"Well, I can't become professional in a day," I mutter, half disappointed, half-embarras**ed

How come it looks so easy when he does it? I've never seen him stumble. Nor any of the people who do it in TV shows or movies.

"You don't have to be a professional," Luke walks over to me "all we need is for you to be able to aim without falling over in the process."

“And how—

Words die on my tongue when I feel a warm presence behind me. Luke’s arms slid over mine, holding my hands a little higher than how I had them. His chest presses to my back, I feel heat rush to my face.

“Relax,” His breath tickles my ear “If you’re so tense, you’ll stumble for sure.”

What the hell?! How can I relax when a man is holding me like this? I’m a decent girl for the moon’s sake. I’m not used to this kind of thing!

“Pull the trigger, Hazel.” He says, his voice almost soft

Unthinking, I pull the trigger. Though I don’t stumble, my aim was too off target.

I hear Luke sigh before he muttered to himself “Why did I think a weak omega female could do this?”

Indignation spread through me like wildfire. I tighten my grip on my weapon, almost bruising my palms.

Get a grip, Elise! Be professional! Do you want to win or not?

Taking a deep breath, I ignore the warmth of his body and look at the tree like it’s my sworn enemy. I can do this.

Omega or not, female or not, I’m not helpless or weak.

I pull the trigger, the foil-clad cork hits the tree before bouncing off to the ground.

I turn my face just slightly and meet Luke’s dark blue gaze, a smirk playing at my lips.

“You were saying, Winters?”

“I was saying,” he leans down, reducing our distance to mere inches “We don’t have time to waste.”

Right. I turn my face ahead again, ignoring however warm it felt. But before I pull the trigger again, I shove the heel of my boot in Luke’s foot. More from shock than from pain, he steps away, letting me go. I pull the trigger. I don’t stumble. My aim hits home.

I turn to face Luke again and put a hand on my hip, the same smirk on my lips. Goddess, I could get used to this.

“Don’t waste time, Luke,” I chide him softly “While I’m practicing, why don’t you map out our route?”

Luke narrows his eyes at me “c***y much, Hazel?”

“Suits me, doesn’t it?” I grin before I turn my face to my target again

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We didn’t move from our campsite the whole day. I kept practicing, even surprising Luke by denying lunchtime to practice. I was no professional, but I knew I wasn’t a hopeless case either.

“We’ll set out towards east tomorrow morning,” Luke tells me, tracing one of the smaller lines on the map “If everything goes well, we can finish this hunt in little more than four weeks.”

I nod, feeling hope and excitement and adrenaline mix together. Finally, I think we might be getting somewhere.

“Don’t get so excited,” Luke says, noticing my expression “We’ll have to keep our guard up all the time.”

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“Oh no worries,” I wave my hand dismissively “Living life on the edge is what I’ve always wanted.”

“After this is over, I think you should see a doctor.”

I give him a look and huff. What would he know? He’s been on the road for the past 5 years! He has no clue how boring and monotonous the pack work gets.

“You turn to keep watch,” Luke says after we had dinner

“My misfortune,” I shake my head

Luke simply goes inside his sleeping bag. I sit cross-legged on the forest bed, chin in my hands. Four more weeks... the moon knows what the path is holding for us.

Time goes by and I start to feel my eyes dropping, the tiredness of the day kicks in. No, no! don’t fall asleep!

But Goddess, the silence and warmth of the fire is tempting me to fall asleep like the dead.

I hurriedly stood up, trying to find a way to distract myself. I dig through my bag and take out one of the two guns

Luke gave me it earlier. I press a kiss to the cold metal, already feeling less sleepy. One of them I've already loaded with solid silver bullets.

I stand up and walk only about ten steps away from our campsite. Practice will keep me from sleeping.

"Bullseye!" I say as another cork hits home

As I reload the gun with foiled cork, I hear a shuffle nearby. My shoulders tense. It's probably just an animal, looking for a better place to sleep.

But my gut clenches in a bad way, my instincts tell me to run. I slowly back away and go back to my campsite. The sight of Luke, even if sleeping, gives me a little comfort. I put my gun back, but the tension in my shoulders doesn't leave.

You're being paranoid, I tell myself, it's probably nothing.

A low growl reaches my ears, I spin around, the gun with bullets in hand. My heart jumps to my throat.

"Luke," I say but my eyes keep darting towards the bushes

After a small groan, I see him sit up from my peripheral.

"What are you doing?" he asks in a raspy voice

"I thought I heard—

Something pounces on me.

My back scarp against the hard forest floor, two heavy paws press my shoulders down. A grey wolf growls at me, my nose crinkles at the horrid smell from its mouth. Like rotten meat.

"You should brush your teeth more," I grit out

My hand moves up and I pull the trigger, a slight swoosh reaches my ears before something warm and wet trickles from the wolf's gut to my hand and clothes. With a pained howl, the beast slumps on me.

Then the weight is gone, someone yanks me up by the arm. Luke and I back away as four wolves close in on us.

"Weren't our wolves locked?" I ask him in a frantic whisper "What are those?"

"Rouges," he says "A trap. When I say run, you—

A brown wolf tackles him to the ground. Luke wedges his hands between its jaws, wrestling the big beast to get it off.

From the corner of my eye, I see one of the other wolves rush towards me. Almost without thinking, I pull the trigger,

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it dodges. Hissing a curse, I frantically move out of its way, its claws graze my arm. I shoot again, the bullet hits home. Whimpering, the wolf falls, red seeping from its side.

I whip my head towards Luke, who's busy trying to keep the other three wolves off him. I raise my gun, my eyes dart between the four figures, unsure of what to do.

Luke throws one of them off his back, his sleeve ripping in the process. I take that as my chance to move, taking aim

I don't think before pulling the trigger. Once. Twice. The wolf falls.

I turn towards Luke but he's standing on his feet, a wolf with broken jaws whimpering at his feet, the other lying limp against a far tree. We meet each other's eyes once as if by magic, we both understand each other.

Run.

Luke grabs his bags and I grab mine, only just realizing the blood coating my clothes and hands, some my own, most from the rouges. I stare at my red hands, mortified. I've killed before, but not like this.

Luke grabs my uninjured arm and starts forward, almost in a sprint. Even though they were solid silver bullets, I don't think those rouges would be dead so easy. I almost turn my head to look back.

"Don't look," Luke tightens his grip on my arm

After the moon knows how long, we stop. Me huffing for breath, Luke looking around with skeptical eyes.

"I think we can stop now," he finally says, dropping his bags

I drop to my knees, closing my eyes and taking lungs fulls of air. Goddess, my throat feels like sandpaper.

"Here," Luke hands me a water bottle, I take a few gulps before tipping the bottle so I could wash the blood off my hands but Luke takes it from me

"We can't waste water, Hazel." He says "This is for drinking, maybe for cleaning wounds but nothing else."

I narrow my eyes at him "I'm not sure I like being coated in blood."

"Why? I think red suits you."

"Very flattering." I give him a look

"Just use your shirt to wipe it away," He says, already taking off his ruined shirt, I see blood seeping from his shoulders, claw marks evident "You did bring other sets of clothes, didn't you?"

I nod and wipe my hands on my current shirt before I start rummaging through my bag for a new one.

Once I come out from behind one of the trees, I see Luke dressed in a fresh shirt, apparently done with cleaning his wounds.

"Let me see your arm," he says as I near him

I hold out my arm, glad that I'd brought more tank tops rather than shirts. Luke cleans the wound with a wet piece of cloth from his previous shirt. I hiss a little, but let him work.

If I thought the cleaning was bad, the application of the disinfectant was worst. I almost jumped away from Luke.

Almost. If he taunts me on my omega behavior right now, I'll lose it.

"We're lucky we got away with bare scr***s." He says

I scoff "Not lucky, talented. I shot three of them, remember?"

The barest smile touches Luke's lips "Congrats, Hazel."

"You're ready to face the actual Hunt."