

In Love With My Best Friend Chapter 13

Astrea

I had a feeling that Leo had coaxed Xander to go hiking that day just to see me. But of course, neither of them would say that. I had no complaints though. I loved his presence. Although my schedule was packed and we barely had time to eat, I thought about him every day. Especially when we finally get to rest during the night.

After several weeks of intense training, we went back to the Palace to meet the Queen and the Royal Prince. We lined up in front of them to listen to what they had to say. The trainer bowed down in respect and all ten of his students followed.

“I have trained them to the best I could, Your Highness. I have taught them everything I know,” he said.

The Queen smiled, pleased with what she had heard.

“Thank you Master Haru. We appreciate your splendid work,” she turned to one of the guards and motioned to him. He bowed down and hastened to do what she silently asked him to.

She stood up when the guard brought a red velvet box that was decorated with golden designs. Smiling politely, she handed it to the grandmaster.

“Please accept this little souvenir from us as a token of appreciation,” she said.

“Thank you,” he said as he accepted the gift.

“We have transferred your fees to your account. We hope you have enjoyed teaching our young team,” she said.

“Yes. They are fast learners and I am proud of them,” he replied. “Thank you for trusting me, Your Highness. I would like to ask for your permission to leave,” he said.

“You may,” she replied, nodding her head.

He bowed again and turned around towards us. His face was beaming as he faced us, apparently swelling with pride.

I smiled. We have learnt from him that bowing was a way to show gratitude. It was part of his discipline and we, too, had learnt from him. After strengthening my body, I squeezed my arms beside me and bowed my upper body down, just how he taught us.

When I straightened my spine, I realised that my friends had followed my example to show our gratitude to our instructor. He seemed to be shaken up by our little gesture. Speechless, he also bowed in response and walked away, leaving us with the Royals.

Sir Elliott stood up and walked around the table. As usual, he maintained a calm demeanour as he faced us.

“Congratulations on your success. You all must be aware why we began this quest. It has been a while since our packs were attacked by rogues. We suspected that the sudden silence couldn’t mean anything good. And unfortunately, we were right,” he paused.

I gave him my full attention. Being right about that was bad news.

“While you were completing your training, we noticed that their activities had increased in the wilderness. So we sent a group of our warriors to patrol around in the forests. They came back last night. They brought back news of a possible hidden lair in the west. The rogues kept disappearing somewhere in the unclaimed part of the forest. Our warriors followed them as secretly as they could, but they couldn’t figure out where the scoundrels were going,” Sir Elliot explained.

“They can’t vanish into the thin air. But even after scouring the area, they couldn’t find a hideaway. But the activity of the rogues and the unity between them is suspicious. So that’s your first mission. Spy on them and find out what they are up to. We will make use of every element we can. Leo’s grandfather, who is a wizard, had made a potion that would make the one who drinks it disappear for twenty-four hours at our request. I think those who are here from the Dark Howl pack might have heard about it before.”

Sir Elliot glanced at me and I nodded in response. Amelia, a witch in our pack, and our beta female, Ava, made such potions. The potions weren’t used often. Only during special circumstances, like a war.

“We will separate you into two groups. Which means that five of you will go towards the unclaimed land in the west of the kingdom. That is where our warriors had noticed the rogues. The other five will go to the south. The land in the north and east is claimed by our packs and they will patrol their territory and inform us. We will send help if they need reinforcement,” Sir Elliot explained.

“Astrea, Elena, Sarah, Arnold, and Rafael will go to the west. Simon, Roger, Archie, Kora, and Bianca go to the south. We will send you off when the sun sets. So you have the whole day to relax. Come back at six in the evening. We will give you all the specific instructions and the essential items you might need to use during the expedition,” Sir Elliot nodded his head at us.

Smiling, “you may leave,” the Queen told us.

We bowed our heads to show our obedience and walked outside.

They went back to their dorms to catch some sleep before we were supposed to report back for duty. I went to the Palace. It had been a long time since I stepped into the room provided for me. But as I walked along the hallway, I eyed Leo’s room, my lips stretching into a little smile.

I wished that I could meet him. But he would most probably be in training at the moment. So there was no point in knocking on his door.

“We should use this time to rest, Astrea,” I heard Ash’s advice via our mind link.

“We have an important mission ahead of us. We can meet our boyfriend later,” she added.

Boyfriend?

I snickered but didn’t reply. Yeah. We have confessed our feelings, but we haven’t given a name to our relationship yet. We still had to keep things hidden. The only people aware of our relationship were Xander and Sarah, but they wouldn’t utter a word in the presence of anyone else.

Ash was right anyway. But all I wanted to do was see him now. I smirked. Maybe I should sneak into the training arena. Perhaps I would catch a glimpse of him.

“Like... Seriously?” Ash exclaimed in my head.

I chuckled. She most probably heard my thoughts.

“Come on. We haven’t seen him since the day he and Xander visited us. And after we leave on our mission, heaven knows for how long we will be away,” I retorted.

I felt her roll her eyes.

“Fine. But only because I also like him a lot, and we haven’t seen him since Zoro awakened,” she mumbled under her breath.

Snickering, I rushed towards the arena, eager to see him before I went back to my room. However, as I passed by the library that was on the ground floor of the palace, a whiff of a familiar scent caught my attention.

I frowned.

“That’s his scent, alright. It’s stronger than it used to be. I guess because Zoro is now awake,” Ash said.

I followed my nose. The scent was definitely coming from the library. When I peeked inside, I saw that Xander and Leo were seated at a table where a large pile of books was mounted.

Oh, so no training today? I grinned as I entered.

It would be great if I could surprise them. But just as I was about to approach them, a tall, slender blond walked towards them holding another set of books, followed by an equally attractive brunette.

They both looked impressive even in their simple shirts and jeans. I suddenly felt ordinary in their presence.

But who were they?

The blond sat beside Xander while the other girl took a seat beside Leo and handed him a book. I scowled. The girls were undoubtedly with them. A pang of jealousy tugged at my heart, which I quickly pushed away.

They must just be friends.

I forced a smile as I walked up to them and cleared my throat. It seemed that they were so engrossed in what they were reading that they didn't observe my scent.

Leo was the first one to look up.

"Astrea?"

A broad grin spread across his face. He quickly stood up and pulled me into a hug, which I gladly accepted.

"Hey," Xander smiled at me.

"Hey," I smiled back.

"Is this the girl you said? Your best friend?" the brunette asked. Holding back my urge to scoff, I looked at her. I didn't like the way she looked at me. Maybe it was just my crazy emotions.

"Don't make a fool of yourself. They don't know about you and Leo," Ash reminded me.

"Yeah. This is Astrea," Leo looked at me and winked. "My closest friend since forever. Now a part of the Queen's special team," he said, and I offered a polite smile.

"Astrea, this is Natasha and Danisha. They are also lycans in training," he explained.

"I thought you guys would have training today," I said.

"We are here to take a few notes about our history. A part of our studies," Xander clarified.

"Yeah. We have to get our assignments done by tonight. Tomorrow is the due date," the blond said.

"Oh, okay. So, I guess you guys are busy," I sighed. "I'm going. I have to report to duty by sunset, anyway. I should go and rest," I uttered, and stepped away.

“Wait, let me walk you back,” Leo hurriedly followed. We didn’t talk much as we climbed the stairs and strolled along the passage. However, as soon as we reached my room, he pushed himself inside after me.

Giggling, “what are you doing?” I asked.

Hastily closing the door behind him, he collected me in his arms and squeezed my body against his.

“I missed you,” he mumbled as he placed his face against the crook of my neck.

Gleaming in joy, “I missed you too,” I sighed.

“You’re leaving again?” He asked.

Nodding my head, “it’s our first mission. We have to go and spy on the rogues’ movements. Sir Elliot suspects that they might have a hidden lair in the unclaimed land. So that is what we are going to do,” I told him.

I closed my eyes and enjoyed the warmth of his body. If only I could remain in his arms for as long as I wanted to.

“Can I show you something really cool?” He asked after some time.

I bobbed my head. Smirking, he took a step back and opened his palm.

“Watch,” he said.

To my surprise, blue fire emerged from the centre of his palm. My eyes widened in shock as a loud gasp of excitement escaped my lips. The little flame danced on the centre of his palm. It was the most magical thing I had witnessed. As we grew up, he never displayed any sign of having magical powers and I guess his mom, who was a hybrid – a lycan-sorceress, didn’t worry about it much. Maybe they thought he didn’t have it in him, but it looked like they were wrong. He did possess it.

I looked at him, grinning from ear to ear.

“Leo! You have powers!” I squealed.