

In Love With My Best Friend Chapter 17

Astrea

As we strode through the trees, a faint, metallic scent made me scrunch my nose. As we walked forward, the odor intensified until I could no longer ignore it.

“Do you smell that?” I voiced my thoughts.

But before Sarah said anything, the unbearable odor of burning rubber hit my nostrils.

I felt Sarah go stiff as my senses heightened.

“Rogues?” She linked me.

“I guess... let’s go,” I replied through our mind link and followed my nose.

A continuous sound of someone banging something soon reached our ears. The steady dull thud was followed by someone’s agonising grunts of pain. We hid in a thick bush and peeked through the leaves. My eyes widened at what I saw.

A dark-haired lean rogue was tied to a tree trunk while a group of rogues took turns to whack him using a large wooden plank. I frowned, wondering why they would beat him up. If we could listen to what they were saying, we might just find out what the outburst was about.

“What the...” Sarah gasped.

“Shh. Listen,” I linked her.

Staying still, I closed my eyes and tried to eavesdrop on their conversation. I needed my full focus to listen to them at the moment. We were hiding a good distance away from them, but still, with our enhanced senses, it wouldn’t be hard to spy on their discussion.

“You should have known better than going behind our backs!” One of them bared his teeth at the drooping rogue, who was undoubtedly in immense pain.

“Maybe he thought he could escape,” his companion chortled. He smacked the captured rogue in anger.

“Speak up! Why aren’t you saying anything?” Another one landed a blow on his face? His lack of response to their hits made me realise that he might be barely conscious.

“What do you get from them? These packs are bad news. Why else do you think we don’t submit to them?” The one who was standing in front of them spat at him.

Clenching onto the thick wooden shaft, he growled at the tied up rogue who could barely wield himself. Even from a distance, I could clearly see that they were furious.

It looked like he had somehow betrayed his friends.

“He has gone too far. Just joining a pack wouldn’t have been of our concern if he didn’t try to sneak out a sample of the vial!” One of them hissed.

Vial? What was that? Could they be part of what we were trying to look out for?

Squinting at them with a critical glare, I tried to analyse the situation. I felt suspicious. Maybe all the rogues had pledged their loyalty to the ‘boss’. We needed to find out who that was and what he was doing, preferably before the night of the blood moon.

“Traitor!” One of them screamed as he landed a hard blow onto the captivated rogue’s stomach using the wooden pole. He coughed out blood and his body spasmed with the force of the blow.

To my surprise, I heard Sarah whimper. When she squeezed my hand, I realised that we were still holding hands. I froze. Wait... did that mean...

“Is he your mate?” I asked her through our link. Instead of a reply, I received a painful whimper in response.

With wide eyes, I glanced back at the tied up rogue. If he was Sarah’s mate, we had to save him. Especially since there was a chance that he might cooperate with us.

“Astrea...” Sarah finally whimpered. “I... I think that is him. His beautiful smell is mixed with that of blood. I can’t take it,” she sounded broken even in my head.

A loud shout caught our attention. The rogues were beating him again.

“They are going to kill him, Astrea,” she sobbed.

“Let’s save him,” I mumbled.

“But...” Sarah whispered in a shaky voice. “My mate is a rogue?”

I could have sworn she was near tears.

“Hush, woman. If he is mated to you, there must be a good reason for that,” I retorted.

Suddenly, we realised that the sound of the beatings had stopped. It had become too silent. When we glimpsed through the leaves, we saw that the rogues were looking around and sniffing the air. I flinched. I guess I had spoken out instead of mind linking Sarah.

“Do you think they heard us?” I questioned her through our link.

“Maybe. At least they stop torturing him,” she replied via the link.

“Let’s get them,” I said and took my gun, which was loaded with silver bullets.

I smirked as I aimed it at them. They were in for a tremendous surprise.

“Ready?” I asked as I coked my pistol.

“Oh, yes. More than ready,” I heard her hum.

We started to fire at them, hitting them one by one, careful not to hit the one who was tied up.

Some of them scurried to take cover behind the trees while covering their injured limbs. Those who weren’t hit, helped their comrades while a few of them lay dead amidst the blood coated leaves on the forest floor.

“Shit... move,” I whispered and slithered to the side. I knew that they would fire at the bushes if they were armed.

I crept along the sidelines towards a tree that some of them hid behind. One rogue had torn part of his shirt to care for his friend's maimed arm. Most probably to reduce blood loss.

"Who the fúck could that be?" He grumbled as he tied the piece of cloth.

Scoffing, I pointed my gun at them.

"Your worst nightmare," I smirked. Their widened eyes and the smell of fear that radiated from them made me smirk. Two shots and both of them lay dead on the ground with gunshot wounds on their heads.

I heard more gunshots on the other side. Sarah must be targeting some of the scoundrels. I ran past the tree that they had tied Sarah's mate, and sniffed the air. The burning rubber scent that hung in the air led me towards the bushes. I narrowed my eyes at the thick vegetation and picked up my gun as I crept around the bushes. My lips curved in a triumphant smile. I was right. More rogues had hidden behind them. I pointed my gun at them and pressed the trigger, only to find out that I had run out of bullets.

To my dismay, the sound of my gun alerted the rogues. Their first instinct was to run away. They didn't try to attack. Of course, they wouldn't be able to see me. Being invisible was a massive advantage to us.

Some of them started to shift in an attempt to escape, while others tried to take cover in the bushes.

Oh no, you don't!

I thought as I took a tear gas bomb that was infused with wolfsbane vapour from my belt. I removed its pin and threw it at their feet. Soon enough, the whole area was filled with its dense fumes and soon, I heard them coughing and I knew the toxic fumes were doing their job well .

Crouching down to minimise making contact with the harmful gases, "Sarah, get your mate!" I ordered via our link.

When the mist cleared away just enough for us to see the rogues who were trying to catch their breath on the ground, I casually walked up to them and tied them up using the rope I carried with me. They groaned and wheezed, but I didn't feel even an ounce of compassion towards them. I needed to find out if they were allies of the 'boss'.

“Who...” one of them coughed. “Who the fúck are you?” His voice was hoarse, yet he spoke.

I sniggered as I glanced at Sarah’s mate. He was now lying on the ground. Sarah must have untied him.

“Sarah, is he okay?” I used our link to communicate with her.

“I think so. But we should hurry and take him to the kingdom. His pulse is extremely weak,” she replied.

“I said, who are you? Why can’t we see or sniff you out? Are you ghosts?” The rogue demanded, making me laugh out loud.

They visibly shuddered when they heard me laughing.

“Did I scare you?” I jeered.

“We need you to tell us one thing. What is the vial you were talking about?” I asked, ignoring his pathetic questions.

Rolling his eyes, “what would a dead ghost do with that? The vial is only useful to living beings,” he mumbled, rather arrogantly.

I scoffed. This rogue displayed superiority despite being at my mercy.

Raising an eyebrow, “so, you won’t tell us?” I breathed out.

“Yup.”

“We don’t trust ghosts.”

“Yeah! We only trust our boss! He has promised us pow.....”

“Shut up you big idiot!” One of them hushed his companion. I smirked. The ‘boss’ again. So the vial was something among his weapons. I wondered what connection it had to the secret weapon and the blood moon. We still have a lot to find out.

“Astrea... Hurry!” I heard Sarah’s whimper in my head.

Smiling sweetly, “it has been lovely meeting you, gentlemen. But since I don’t have the whole day for this, I think this should end here,” I declared.

“Wait,” one of them called as he struggled against the ropes I had tied him with.

“Who are you?”

I picked up my spare gun, which was fully loaded, and sighed as I pointed it at them.

“Well. Let’s say we are the spirits of your ancestors and they are very disappointed in you all,” I smirked and started to shoot them. If they were teaming up with the ‘boss’ to attack the kingdom, the only way out was death. That was unless there was hope of redemption – which was the case of Sarah’s mate.

As soon as I was done with the group, I rushed towards the motionless wolf who was lying on the floor.

“Sarah?” I called.

“Yes.”

“Can you... is it him? I mean do you feel the sparks?” I asked.

“Yes. But barely,” she wept.

I bit my lower lip. His face was swollen and his hair was matted with dried blood. He was undoubtedly tormented and now, had lost his consciousness.

“Let’s go. We have to save him,” I told her as calmly as I could, despite my pounding heart.

“I’m shifting. Can you put him on my back?” She sounded urgent.

“Yes, mindlink me,” I replied.

I took the limp body in my hands and waited for Sarah’s instructions. It was hard to place him on her back since she was invisible. However, I managed to achieve it.

“Now go, I’m following you,” I told her and shifted to my wolf as I watched the motionless body being carried away.