

## Chapter 114-1

We walk into the training room to find Stephen already there waiting for us. The door has barely even closed before Seth has his shirt off and both men are standing before each other, sizing each other up.

“Thomas is bigger than you,” Seth tells him and he nods. “You’ll have to be faster. He’s old, but he’s more experienced at fighting. Only one wolf has ever taken him down that we know of.”

“Who?” he asks and Seth tilts his head at me.

“My mate’s father,” he tells him.

Stephen's eyes become wide. “Alpha Randall fought him before?”

“No,” I tell him with a smile. “My biological father. Alpha Benjamin.”

Stephen just stares at me a moment, glancing to Seth a time or two. “I’ve only heard stories of him. He was supposed to be a good fighter.”

“One of the best,” Seth tells him. “I linked him earlier. He said that he’s weak on his right side, which is good, because you’re left-handed.”

“So I might actually have a chance?” Stephen asks, seeming a bit more hopeful now.

“Yes. Here's hoping he doesn't know, so you can catch him off guard. First though, can you link your cook and have them bring something up for Molly to eat?” Seth asks him and he nods. “What can you handle, Molly? You’ve got to eat something.”

“I don’t know. Maybe some wilted spinach? With goat cheese and cranberries? And Pecans?” I ask, feeling a little ridiculous but it does actually sound good.

Stephen chuckles, but his eyes glass as he links them. “They’ll have it here in a bit for you, Princess.”

Without warning, Seth tackles him to the ground. Stephen scrambles, trying hard to get free of his hold, but Seth is substantially stronger than him. He lets up just enough that Stephen can get a good grip, but he continues to fight him, pushing him hard to get himself loose. Finally, Seth lets him go and stands.

“You’ve got to be able to free yourself,” Seth tells him.

Stephen’s shoulders sag. “I know. I’m trying. It’s just difficult.”

Seth nods at him. “He’s not going to take it easy on you. He may be acting cool, but he knows you have the advantage with your age. He’s going to come out forceful and you’re going to have to find his weakness and capitalize on it.”

Seth moves him to stand in the middle and stands behind him, wrapping his arm around his neck. “If he’s got you like this, you’ve got to reach back and move like this,” he tells him, moving his hand for him and showing him how to free himself from the hold.

“And at the very least,” I interject. “You can always claw his eyes.”

“That’s against the rules,” Stephen says to me.

“It’s a challenge,” I tell him seriously. “There are not really any rules. If you get into a dangerous situation, then you have to fight dirty. The alternative is dying and your pack being turned over.”

“She’s right,” Seth tells him with a nod. “I’ve watched Alphas die to keep their ‘honor’ in a challenge, but for what? They’re dead and their pack is no longer theirs. What’s the point?”

“So you want me to fight dirty?” Stephen asks, clearly bothered about being told this.

Seth shakes his head. “I want you to do whatever it takes to stay alive.”

There’s a knock on the door of the training room and when told to enter, the door cracks open. Katie-May walks in carrying a tray with my food and a glass of water. She bows and looks around, clearly trying to figure out where to place the food since there are no tables.

“I’ll take it,” I tell her with a smile and reach out to her. It smells so good and my stomach growls at the thought of food. “Thank you.”

“You’re welcome. Is there anything else that you need?” she asks and I shake my head, taking a bite, closing my eyes and savoring the delicious flavor. “OK. I’ll leave then,” she says, glancing at the shirtless men and blushing a little as she scampers out of the door.

“See?” I ask Seth. “That’s why you had to wear a shirt.”

He rolls his eyes and turns back to Stephen, dropping and taking his legs out from under him. “You’ve got to be prepared, even before it actually starts. There are no rules. He could attack early.”

They continue for a while, Seth taking him down, but then showing him how to get out next time. To his credit, he seems to be learning quickly. Some of these were techniques Robbie insisted that I learn, but I was never strong enough to actually take him, or anyone, down.

I finish my food, thankful that it’s not making me feel as terrible as dinner did, as the men decide to take a break from training. Seth walks over and places his hand on my leg.

“Are you alright, Love?” he asks me and I nod. “Just let me know if we need to go upstairs.”

“I’m fine,” I tell him. “I’m going to lay down here. Please, don’t worry about me. Stephen is all you should worry about right now. We need him to win.”

He nods and kisses me on the forehead. “It will all be fine.”

“I know,” I tell him with a smile. “You should have let him call Benjamin, let him get some tips. I think it would make him feel better.”