

Chapter 26

Charlotte POV

"Arrogant ASSHOLE!" Shoving away from him, I had to force myself to not blast him out of this fucking cave.

Waylon laughed at me which just irritated me more. "Do you want to get on my back and I'll climb down?"

My eyes were glowing as I shoulder checked him. Not even giving him the satisfaction of issuing an insult, I just started climbing down. After all this time, he still thought of me as a little girl. A helpless damsel in distress. Well fuck that! The more Waylon keeps underestimating me, the more satisfaction I am going to get by shoving it in his face that I truly did not need him! Fuck him and his magic fingers!

As soon as my feet hit the ground, I turned north and started walking. Waylon can catch up. Shouldn't take too long with his massive ego. Not that I even knew where I was but he said north so I am going north.

His footsteps were silent behind me but occasionally I would hear the squish of mud under his shoes. The night was silent as the rain had lightened up. Lightning still illuminated the sky but the mist in the air left it chilly. If I was to stop, the cold would seep into my newly soaked clothes and I would be shivering.

More than once I wanted to ask Waylon about a direction or just this journey in general but I kept my mouth shut. That was for two

reasons. The first one was not wanting to be loud where someone would over hear us. In the dead of the night, voices carry. The second was just the fact I didn't want to speak with his stupid ass.

It wasn't until his hand wrapped around my arm that I quickly turned and glared at him. "WHAT?" I whispered angrily.

"This is where my territory stops. Once we pass through the treeline, we will be on open land. You know what that means. I have many friends but we can't let them know I am passing through. We have to do this completely under the radar."

"Obviously. Do you honestly think I am that stupid?" It was like he was trying to mansplan the situation to me.

Waylon ignored me. "There is more heavily dense forest on the other side of this town. When we get there, we can sleep for a few hours only. Taking turns to keep watch."

"Got it." I said and tried to turn around.

Waylon stopped me again. "As much as I have enjoyed watching your hips sway back and forth, I need to take the lead since I know where I am going."

"Insufferable!" I made a dramatic gesture for him to start walking.

"Stay close." Waylon muttered. His lip was twitching like he was enjoying pissing me off.

"I'll stay close and kick your fucking ass all the way t-" I whispered so low that I didn't think he could hear me. It was more venting to

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myself but when he turned around and raised an eyebrow, I just crossed my arms and popped out my hip.

This was going to be a long fucking trip. I was starting to really reconsider wanting to hide out at his pack. Very seriously reconsidering it. Surely there was an abandoned fox hole I could find and slip into. Best of all, it would only be big enough for me.

I was so caught up in my thoughts that I didn't realize Waylon had stopped walking. He had put his arm out, causing me to run right into it. It caught me so off guard that I grabbed his arm to keep me from falling. As if he expected it, his arm curled around my waist and pulled me against him. It was like I was made for him the way he slipped me on his side.

"Hmm." Waylon smirked at me.

It took all my might to shove off and away from him. "The fuck you stop for?" I whispered.

"That mouth will get you in trouble one day." Waylon half frown and half had this weird sexual tension in him. This man went from hot to cold and back more than any other man.

"Your moods give me whiplash!"

Waylon just rolled his eyes at me. "Look." He pointed ahead.

Looking ahead, I noticed there was a drop off. Slowly, I walked up towards it and got on my hands and knees as I looked over. It was a tiny little town. Lights were still on in some of the houses but most of the town was turned down for the night. The clouds were still

hanging around, allowing the mist to keep us just wet enough to make things uncomfortable. Since I couldn't see the sun, I wasn't sure what time it was. I hadn't grabbed my cell but part of me believed that Waylon did. Not that he gave it to me. The only other person I talked to on it was Axel and there wasn't a need to text him. He was probably enjoying the warmth of a soft silk bed with Nova.

Waylon had got down beside me. "They have different traps and security set up. This is an all human town but they have been attacked by rogues many times. So, their defense system is pretty high tech. We need to keep a wide birth but you need to stay directly behind me. Only put your feet in the same places I put mine. Got it?" The urgency in his voice caused me to turn off my bitchy side and take him seriously.

Nodding my head yes, Waylon stood up and started walking slowly. The drop off was fairly steep.

Normally, this wouldn't have been an issue but with all the rain we had gotten, it was basically a mud slide. As much as Waylon tried to take it slow, he ended up falling on his ass and sliding down the hill. It was dark enough and dense enough that I lost sight of him when he passed through the trees.

Taking a deep breath, there was nothing left for me to do but follow suit. Like Waylon, as much as I tried to stay on my feet, I eventually fell on my ass. However, I was a little more graceful and was able to stay more on my hands than my ass. As soon as I passed through the trees, a strong arm wrapped around my waist and kept me from falling off a massive cliff. One that we wouldn't had survived. Or, at least unharmed.

My instinct was to hold on to Waylon for my dear life as the mud that was under my hands fell on the rocks below. Waylon had me pinned against him as he held onto a tree.

As much as I tried to level my breathing, panic rose in me. "Climb up." Waylon said in a strained voice. Looking up, a massive tree had fallen and laid across the valley below. Waylon tried to lift me up so I could reach the next branch.

"I need to work on my upper body." I muttered more to myself as I lifted myself up with Waylon's help.

Once I was up, I reached down and grabbed his hand to help him climb up also. A sharp twinge ran through my shoulder but it wasn't my pain. Waylon was shifting his shoulder as he tried not to wince in the pain.

"We need to cross the tree." I said as more of a statement than a question.

"Carefully." Waylon answered in a strained voice.

Using my hands to help me stand, I was able to get my feet under me. We could hear the tree start to crack as I stood up. Slowly, my shaky feet found a position where it felt stable. Taking a deep breath, my right foot raised up slightly causing my left foot to completely fall through the tree. The tree buckled under my weight as Waylon and I froze. Something wet was running down my leg.

"DON'T!" I said to Waylon. Anymore weight on this tree and it was a goner. Shifting my weight, I was able to slip my leg out. There was a

gash down my leg but what covered my leg was a brown liquid that was mixing with my blood. Peeking down, I looked into the log, the whole thing was hollow and full of water. It was completely rotted out and was ready to fall at any moment.

Resting my head against the log, I sent a silent prayer up to the Moon Goddess before I got on my hands and knees and tried to widen my base as I crawled on the tree. One leg and arm at a time. It felt like it took forever and the tree kept getting long and longer.

The concern that filled me from Waylon was distracting. It was all I could do to keep my breathing level and not make any sounds. I was five feet from the other side when the whole tree shifted and fell about a foot.

Fear shook my body as I turned and looked at Waylon. His eyes were wide as he looked me in the eyes. The tree buckled again. Bark was falling down, hitting the rocks with a sickening sound. "JUMP!" Waylon half yelled at me right as I leaped to grab a tree root that was sticking out from the other side. My legs fell as my hand wrapped around the root. Hitting the side of the cliff, the tree completely fell, smashing into hundreds of pieces.

"SHIT!" I yelled as my body flailed. Looking up, I tried to grab the root with both hands and use my feet to pull myself up. More than once, my feet slipped and I almost lost my grip. After a third attempt, I was able to pull myself up to my chest, then my waist and finally, I was on the other side. Laying on the wet grass, I took a moment to breathe. The relief Waylon felt helped calm my own nerves down.

Sitting up, I looked back at Waylon. His hands were on his knees and

he was leaning forward as if trying to catch his breath. The distance is too much for him to jump, even as a wolf. Looking on either side, there wasn't a way to cross the valley. We got separated.

"Waylon." I whispered loud enough for him to hear.

"I'll find a way. You keep going. Go straight north and watch your steps. I will catch up to you."



I felt alone. More alone than I ever had in my entire life. It dawned on me how much I had actually allowed him to make me feel like I belonged. Looking head and back at him, I frowned. "Waylon, I-"

"Be brave. You have handled worse. I believe in you." Waylon sent me comforting emotions. "And Charlotte?" Looking back at him, "be safe." It looked like he was going to say something else but in the end, didn't.

After a last look, I turned north and started walking through the trees. The town was directly on my right now. How this town never flooded, I will never know. So much water was standing in puddles that I even wondered how deep they were. More than once I caught the glimmer of something metal just as I was about to put my foot down. Bear traps, or maybe in this case... wolves. They even had trip wires that I had to step over. More than once, I felt like something was watching me but I couldn't see anything.

An owl swooped down in front of me, trying to catch a mouse and even bats were flying around. The night life was comforting as I continued to make my way. Once, I was able to pass by the village, I came up to the other side of the valley that I needed to find a way up.

Standing there, I took my time trying to decide which was the best course of action. That was, until I smelled the very distinct smell of rogues.

 Mrs. Smith 

Thank you all for reading!

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