

Game of Destiny – A Thrilling Tale of Power, Love & Fate

Chapter 27

I was sitting in the back of Finlay's car. He and Martin sat up front. The tense energy rolled off of them in waves.

"Can we try to relax?" I asked. "I know this is a stressful meeting, but if we go in like this, we will add fuel to a fire." Finlay rolled his shoulders and tried to keep the car steady.

"You're right," Martin admitted and made a conscious effort to relax. "When we get there, I think it would make the most sense if me and the Alpha flanked you, Amie," he then said.

"Keep on dreaming. When have you ever seen an Alpha flank a member of their pack that isn't their Luna? Standard procedure is Alpha in the middle, you to the right and me to the left," I objected.

"I don't know, Amie," Finlay started to say.

"Okay. I know what this is and while I find it sweet that the two of you think you need to protect me, you don't. I'm here as a member of the top tier of the pack. We can't make it look like I'm weak. If nothing else, it will paint a target on my back. I can hold my own, thank you very much," I told them. They exchanged a look. "Don't make me slap you in the head."

"Fine. We do it as it should be done," Finlay agreed. I could see in the back view mirror he had the look on his face he usually had when he knew he was making the right decision, but he hated it.

"Fine," Martin said.

"Don't we all feel a lot better now? How long until we are there?" I asked. Both of them shook their heads.

"Twenty minutes," Finlay answered. I relaxed back. The tension was still there, but it had eased a bit. We had decided on a neutral meeting place roughly at the halfway point between the packs. As neither one of us wanted the other pack to know our exact location, it had been a best guess. They arrived at the meeting place. It was a rest stop in the middle of nowhere. A few picnic tables stood half buried in snow in the middle of a clearing next to the road. Finlay parked in the large parking area that was deserted this time of year. The cold did not affect werewolves as it did humans. We could sit in the snow and have the meeting. Finlay didn't have time to turn the car off before another car came from the opposite direction and parked on the other side of the parking lot. Everyone exited their car at the same time. Martin and I flanked Finlay as the two groups of wolves walked towards each other.

"Alpha Finlay, we finally meet."

"Alpha Jackson, a pleasure." The two Alphas shook hands. I noticed Finlay was both taller and looked stronger than Alpha Jackson. Both me and my wolf took pride in that. The two men flanking Alpha Jakson looked like a cross between a bull and a bodybuilder. They took in me and Martin and I saw the smirk they gave us. They believed they could easily take us in a fight if it came to that. I smiled back. I believed that I could do some serious damage before I was taken down. I could even win a fight against one of them if I played my cards right. As the two Alphas walked over to a picnic table, we followed. The snow was cleared off and two tables were placed next to each other, mostly so that the Beta and Gamma of the other pack wouldn't squeeze their Alpha into much if they tried to all sit on one bench. We sat down and Alpha Jackson smiled at me.

"It's an unusual choice to bring the Beta female to a meeting like this," he said to Finlay. It was my upbringing that stopped me from scoffing and rolling my eyes. An Alpha should be treated with respect, even if he was an idiot.

"Amie is my advisor. She has her own seat among the top tier," Finlay corrected him. "To my right is my Beta, Martin."

Alpha Jakson and his two men looked at me with surprise. That's right, I have value, I thought to myself.

"To my right is my Beta, Peter, and to my left my Gamma, Stephen," Alpha Jackson introduced them. As the formalities were over with, I took out the small bag I had with me and put sandwiches on the table and poured us all coffee from a

thermos.

"Please, help yourself," I told the other pack. All three of them stared at what I had offered. I could see them mindlinking each other.

'I can't believe that worked,' Martin mindlinked me and Finlay.

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'Told you it would. If they refuse, they show they don't trust us, which they don't want to do. If they accept they have taken a gift from us without having something to repay it with. Then they are indebted to us,' I linked back. Beta Peter took one of the mugs of coffee and sipped it.

"Thank you," he said. I just nodded.

'We win the first round,' I linked to my two friends.

'Remind me to not play any strategy based games with you, ever,' Martin replied. The discussion between the Alpha moved slowly. It was clear there was no trust between them. I was suspicious of why Alpha Jackson was sitting opposite us when he clearly wasn't interested in forming an alliance. I gathered the now empty mugs and empty sandwich wrappers and stuffed them back in the bag. As I did it, I looked at my phone. It was a message from Medow sent four minutes ago.

Medow: Everything is calm here. Hope you are doing well.

I linked Martin and Finlay to let them know. It made this whole thing even more confusing to me. If they weren't interested in talking, and if they weren't using this time to sneak attack us, then what were we doing here?

"I think we have come as far as we can today," Finlay said after another round of meaningless discussion.

"I agree. I think we have made progress," Alpha Jackson said. Both stood up and the rest of us followed. The Alphas stood to the side, shook hands and exchanged empty pleasantries. The Gamma walked up to me.

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"If all the females in your pack look like you, we will need to give the merging packs another go. Why don't you and I take a little walk in the woods?" he suggested. Martin took a step in between us, facing the brute of a Gamma.

"Protecting the little flower?" the man laughed. Martin chuckled.

"You think I'm protecting Amie? That's cute. I'm not protecting her from you. I'm protecting you from her. My Alpha has gone to big trouble to get these talks going positively. I'm thinking that Amie maiming you by removing an appendage from you, probably one you really like, might toss a wrench in that. So, here I am, protecting you from her," he told the gorilla-like man. I took pleasure in seeing the Gamma change his stance and close the gap between his legs. Finlay turned to look at us and I gave him a big smile. One of his eyebrows went up, as usual he saw through my attempt to look innocent. When we got back into the car and watched the others do the same, I still had the feeling I was missing something. As we left the parking area and headed for home, we all sat in silence for a while.

"Anyone else feel like they're missing the big read blinking neon sign telling us what the fuck this meeting was?" Martin asked. Both Finlay and I laughed and agreed.

"He didn't even try to broker an alliance," Finlay said. "Not that I wanted one, but he made it obvious."

"I was sure they intended to attack the pack behind our backs. But everything is still peaceful at home," I said.

"That's something to be grateful for," Martin commented. Both Finlay and I agreed.

"It may be as easy as they wanted to assess how strong we are, and they decided we are too strong for them to mess with us," Finlay suggested. The rest of the drive home was made mostly in silence. All three of us had things to think about.

When we got back to the pack, we could feel the tension in the air. As news about our safe return spread, the pack relaxed. We spent some time just walking around, letting the pack see us and talk to us. Then the top rank gathered in our meeting room to discuss the day. Sam and Medow had nothing to report. No stray wolves had been detected along the borders, no threats, nothing out of the ordinary. According to them, it had been a day like any other day. We ended up discussing the odd behaviour of Alpha Jackson and his Beta and Gamma. After hours, we reluctantly decided we had too little information to come to a conclusion. We decided to keep a close eye on the pack and increase the patrols of the borders. I could see how much it bothered Finlay to leave things open.