

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

Chapter 52

‘Red, how are you holding up?’ Finlay mindlinked as he looked back at me.

‘Fine. I think I can hold on. But I don’t think I can pull him up,’ I said.

‘Ramses, Amie, stay put and hold on. Alpha, let’s make our way as close as we can. If they act as anchors, we can pull him up,’ Sam said. I focused on breathing and not thinking about the pain in my fingers. Finlay came back and was next to me.

‘Ready?’ Finlay asked.

‘Ready,’ Sam agreed. Finlay used one arm to reach across to where the rope was holding up Jake, swinging below us.

When Finlay and Sam pulled on the rope, I felt relief as the weight was no longer on me. It was hard for them to pull him up using only one arm each, but it didn’t take long before Jack reached up and took a grip on the holds.

‘Got it?’ Finlay asked.

‘Yes, Alpha. Thank you, and sorry about the trouble,’ Jake replied.

‘Don’t think about it. Let’s finish this,’ Finlay said and started moving across again. My arms objected as I started moving.

It was hard going from a standstill to swing forward. When we all had come past the outcrop, we took a moment to breathe again.

‘It won’t get easier, let’s get it over with,’ Finlay told us and we moved again. The climb became steeper, the holds smaller. As the top came into view, we could see how small it was. It would be a stretch for us all to fit. The holds were barely enough for me to be able to put my weight on. All parts of my body objected as we pushed forward. ‘I’m up,’ Finlay declared, and I felt him pull on the rope to help me with the last part. When I got up on the small flat surface, we took a hold of the rope connecting me to Jake and helped him up as well. We manoeuvred so Finlay could help Jake to pull Ramses up and finally Sam joined us. We had to hook arms around each other for all to stay in place and not fall off the edge.

‘Blue Mountain pack, you have finished the game with four minutes to spare. One moment and we will get you down.

Congratulations on finishing the first game.” There were howls coming from our pack members who had been watching us. Hidden in a crevice there was a long rope attached to an anchor. We used it to scale down the rock face.

‘Well done, everyone. Let’s join the others and watch the rest of the game and then we go back to the cabin and talk it

through,’ Finlay mindlinked us. We all walked over to where the rest of our team sat on the benches.

“You were brilliant. Well done!” Matilda said as she handed out bottles of water and sandwiches to us.

“Thank you,” I said as I was grateful to sit down. My arms were burning and my fingers and toes were chaffed. They would heal before the end of the day, but for now, they were painful.

‘Are you okay?’ Finlay asked in a mindlink.

‘I’m fine. A little bruised, but nothing that won’t get better before the day is over. Especially when I get Matilda’s food.

How about you? It was very impressive to see you and Sam pull Jake up like that,’ I told him. He gave me a smirk.

‘How impressive? Impressive enough to earn me a reward?’ he asked. I smiled and shook my head.

‘We will see,’ I said.

‘Eat,’ he told me and nudged me with his elbow.

‘You eat,’ I said, giving him a nudge back. We both smiled as we started in on our sandwiches. We watched as another pack started up the rocks. They had also chosen to tie themselves together with the rope. About halfway up the rock, the last one in their group lost his grip and fell. The second to last got the entire weight on him. There seemed to be confusion in the group about what to do and, in a panic, the second to last member used his claw to sever the rope. The member who was dangling from the rope gave a shout as he started free falling. I gasped. He hit the ground with an audible thud. Everyone watched the body on the ground. There was a moan, and he rolled over on his back. We all drew a sigh of relief. At least he was alive. The group, still on the rock, continued climbing and eventually reached the top.

‘What the fuck was that?’ Sam asked in a mind link.

‘Pathetic,’ Finlay said.

‘It’s not the first one. We have seen three packs who have lost team members on the way up,’ Hugo, one of our support staff, said.

‘Three?’ I asked in disbelief.

‘Some didn’t even use the rope,’ Matilda scoffed. It was clear what she thought of those packs.

‘But teamwork was one part they were scoring,’ Jake pointed out.

‘Some packs have too much confidence in their own capabilities. I bet my tail on that they all expected their pack members to make it to the top without issue,’ Finlay remarked.

‘Yeah, that’s true. They probably have a team with strong pack members,’ Jake said.

‘Strength isn’t always a positive thing for this kind of tasks. I think we will see that now,’ I told him as I saw their old pack,

led by Finlay’s brother, come to do their first run at the game. Finlay tensed up next to me.

‘They are strong at least,’ Jake said. I could hear in his voice he was blaming himself for his grip slipping.

‘They are,’ Sam agreed. ‘But they also have the body weight of three of you. There will be a lot of weight put on their digits.’ We all watched as they stood in a group, mindlinking their strategy on the side of the rock formation. They didn’t even look at the tools provided for them.

“We are ready,” Finlay’s brother called out after five minutes. The announcer started the clock for the game and all five of the participants flew towards the rock formation. They made decent progress for the first third of the climb. I knew it was after that point the holds would get smaller. I could see the speed of their progress decrease. It almost came to a stop as they struggled. By the time they came to the outcrop, they looked visibly exhausted. As they started to make their way

under the ledge, they struggled. One of the men slipped with one hand and everyone gasped as he managed to keep his grip with the hand he still had a hold with.

“Don’t fucking slip,” Finlay’s brother growled for everyone to hear.

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“Yes, Alpha,” the team member said in a strained voice. I could see his efforts to raise himself high enough to be able to get a new grip with the free hanging arm. Finlay’s brother had made his way to the other end of the ledge, and the other tree had gone back so they wouldn’t have to wait while putting all their weight on their fingers.

‘Why aren’t they helping him?’ I asked Finlay.

‘Because that would be to show weakness,’ he told me. I disagreed with his brother. It was not to show weakness to help a pack mate in need. It was to show weakness when you were too afraid to help those who needed it.

“Use your claws,” Finlay’s brother growled. Again, for all to hear. It was a clear sign of how tired and unfocused he was.

“But Alpha,” the man objected.

“Just fucking do it,” Finlay’s brother demanded. I could hear the claws digging into the rock and it let the dangling man lift himself up and continue. His team mates followed after. They resumed the climb, but the mood was off. I could feel the irritation in the air from where we sat. Their struggle to get all five members to stand on the top was interesting to watch and reminded me of a wrestling match. I tried my best not to giggle, but I heard several audience members failing

at the task. When all five pack members finally stood on the top the commentator was heard.

“Ocean shore pack, you have completed the game with two minutes to spare. You did use claws, which is a clear offence

of the rules. Your final score will be marked down by fifty per cent.”

‘Oh dear me,’ Matilda said. Finlay just shook his head. We watched the final packs as well. When the final pack of our designated area had finished we packed up and headed back towards our cabin.

“Amie!” The pack closed ranks around me, as my name was called. I looked around me at my pack mates with a mix of surprise and gratitude.

‘It’s okay, it’s my brother,’ I mindlinked them. They reluctantly parted to give me space to walk up to Elder.

“They are protective. I’m guessing you have told them about what’s happening?” he asked as he looked back at the group from my pack. They stood a couple of feet away, none of them even pretended they didn’t listen to what we were saying. I smiled.

“We did, and they are. How did it go for you today?” I asked.

“Good, I think. We all made it to the top within the set time. It’s a little nerve-racking we don’t get the points until the final day,” he said. “How did you do?”

“Same here,” I told him.

“Good. I was wondering, tomorrow is set aside to let the packs talk to each other and arrange for diplomatic meetings. Would you be free in the evening to go for a run with me and my mate?” he asked.

“Just you and your mate?” I asked, I needed to be sure.

“Yes. Just family,” he reassured me.

“I would love to.” He smiled.

“Mom and dad can’t stop talking about your call. By the way dad boasts about his daughter being the Beta of her pack, you would think I was a regular pack wolf,” he told me and laughed.

“I have always been their favourite,” I teased him.

“No way. Mom always gave me the bigger portions,” he objected.

“Because you were growing like an ogre,” I reminded him. We both laughed.

“See you tomorrow, Amie.”

“Looking forward to it.” I said. We gave each other a hug, and I returned to the pack. “See. I’m fine. Thank you for looking out for me,” I told them. We went back to our cabin and Matilda and two others started with dinner while Finlay,

Sam, Jake, Ramses and I sat down to talk things through.

“We did good today,” Sam said.

“I messed up,” Jake objected.

“No, there was a mistake. It happens,” I insisted.

“She is right,” Ramses agreed. “If anything, it gave us an opportunity to show off our teamwork.” We all nodded.

“We all got to the top, followed the rules, and no one got injured. It was a good day,” Finlay said. There was a knock on the front door.

“Looks like it won’t end yet,” Sam said as he got up to open the door. He returned and handed an envelope to Finlay.

“From the council apparently,” he said. Finlay opened it, read it, looked like he was going to kill someone and then took a deep breath which he slowly released.

“Amie, Sam, with me,” he said and headed up the stairs. Sam and I looked at each other as we followed him.