

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

Chapter 58

The following day was dedicated to training. The five of us all felt a little off and distracted and getting a day to work out was just what we needed. Both to work out some of the pent-up emotions we were dealing with, but also to ease us back into being a team. When we finished training in the afternoon, we all felt a lot better than we had done going into the training in the morning. We were ready to take on the game the next day. After dinner we had another call with the pack back home and I felt relieved to see they had also settled into the news and seemed to be doing better. We went to bed early but when I got into my bed, I couldn't relax.

'Are you sleeping?' Finlay mindlinked after half an hour.

'Yes,' I replied.

'Liar, why aren't you sleeping?'

'I could ask you the same,' I countered.

'But I asked you first.'

'Too many thoughts. Trying to figure out a strategy, wondering if we need to be worried about sabotage and trying to figure out what kind of game we are playing tomorrow,' I told him.

'Those are big thoughts. Maybe put them to the side and deal with them tomorrow?' he suggested.

'Brilliant, why didn't I think of that? This is why you are the Alpha.'

'Did you just sass your Alpha?' he asked. The amusement in his mindlink was clear.

'I did.'

'And you admit to it. I may need to reconsider if you are Beta material.'

'Stop saying stupid things and I won't need to sass you. It's just me doing my Beta duties to make you the best Alpha you can ever be,' I told him. I could swear I heard him laughing through the wall.

'Go to sleep, Red. We need that brilliant mind of yours to be on point tomorrow,' he said.

'I will if you will.'

'It's a deal. See you tomorrow.' Our short conversation worked to distract me from all my other thoughts, and I managed to go to sleep.

The next morning was worse than the morning of the first game. We all felt the burden of what was resting on our shoulders. We had breakfast and headed for the stadium. We took our usual seats and waited.

"Good morning and welcome to the second game," the speaker's voice said. "Today's game will be about endurance and problem solving. It is an obstacle course where not only speed and agility is tested, but also teamwork and strategy. All packs will start at the same time, follow the same course and face the same obstacles. But it is up to you to use the environment and anything you find within the staked out course to move forward. It is not allowed to attack other participants. It is allowed to make their progress harder. As in the first game, the goal is to get all members of your pack over the finish line. Points will be deducted if not all members make it to the end. Rule violators will be removed as soon as the violation is detected and will score a zero. We wish all of you the best of luck. You will now be escorted to the start of the course. Wait for the horn to start."

'We can do this,' Finlay mindlinked us.

'We need to keep a steady pace. Don't over do it at the start. It will probably not be a short race and we need to have energy to tackle the obstacles,' Sam reminded us. We all nodded as we followed the rest of the packs to the start. I spotted Finlay's brother and his team as they made sure to be at the front. I caught the scent of Elder and James, but it was gone as soon as I scented it, mixed in with all the unfamiliar scents. Everyone was guided to an open area in the forest. The course had been marked with a strong scent, making it clear what area was part of the track and which wasn't. There was a loud signal and everyone set off. It was hard not to join in the panicked sprint many packs were making. My instinct was to keep up with them, not to let them get ahead of me. But I kept reminding myself we needed to save our energy. Twenty minutes into the course, we saw the first obstacle. A ten feet tall wall stood in our way.

'Boost me,' Sam told us as we saw several packs struggling. Fortunately the wall was wide and allowed for several packs to try and get over it at the same time. Finlay and Ramses gave Sam a boost. He managed to get up to sit on the wall and Finlay and I gave Ramses a boost. Sam helped him up and they both sat on the wall.

'I can do this,' Jake said.

'Yes you can!' I agreed. Me and Finlay boosted him and he reached Sam's and Ramses' hands on his first try. Finlay and I waited and watched as they helped him down on the other side of the wall.

'You're up next, Red,' Finlay mindlinked. I nodded, backed up a little to get a running start and then set off. Finlay helped boost me and I flew up towards Sam's and Ramses' outstretched hands. It was not as hard as I thought to get up on the wall and I had no issues jumping down on the other side. I joined Jake on the other side, looking up, as Ramses came down on our side. Soon I could see Finlay's head as Sam helped him get up on the wall. They both joined us and we gave each other a quick smile as we had handled the first obstacle with ease. There were packs who had issues with the obstacle. Some had a member who had scaled the wall and then jumped down and now didn't have the strength to jump back up to help their pack members. Some had issues getting one of their members over the wall. We took a minute to gather ourselves and then we set off again. Many of the packs who had sprinted past us in the beginning were now behind us. We weren't first, but we were gaining ground. Sam was leading the way followed by Ramses and Jake. Me and Finlay came up the rear. The forests undergrowth was becoming difficult to go through. It was snarly and dense.

Sticks and rocks was hiding in the green bushes covering the ground. It was impossible to keep up a high speed. It was equalising the field. And as positive as it was, it was also frustrating to have to move with care. We all saw the clearing start to show between the trees and the packs in front of us sprinted as they got through the dense vegetation. Sam was about to do the same when Ramses grabbed the back of his t-shirt.

'Stop!' he mind linked us all. We stopped dead in our tracks. 'Quicksand' he added. We all watched as the flat floor of the clearing wobbled under the feet of those who had sprinted into it and they began to sink. Screams of surprise were heard as they understood their situation. We stood at the edge of the clearing and watched, hesitant if we should help. The more the people trapped in the quicksand struggled against it, the faster they sank. It seemed they didn't sink lower than their waist. But they seemed to be truly stuck.

'Can we go around?' I asked. We looked in both directions.

'Not without going off the track,' Sam said.

'It's too wide to jump across, can we swing over?' Finlay asked. I had to giggle and the other looked at me like I was crazy.

'Sorry, I just had an image of our Alpha playing Tarzan,' I explained. Even Jake snickered at the image I knew they all got.

As we were trying to figure out a way over, one pack tried to braid some of the undergrowth together and swing over.

The braids didn't stand the weight and disintegrated halfway over. The pack ended up in the quicksand.

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'It's just a non-newtonian fluid,' Jake told us.

'A what?' I asked.

'A fluid that changes viscosity under pressure,' he explained. We all looked at him like he had spoken Chinese. "Like when you try to stir corn starch in water, it feels like a lump, until you stop stirring and it looks like a liquid again.

Quicksand is a fluid that will act as a non-fluid when strong force, such as yanking, is applied to it. But if you move slowly it will act like a fluid. Which gives us two options to make it across.' We all still stared at him. He rolled his eyes. 'Either we get into it and move really, really slowly to the other side. If we do it slowly and carefully it will be like walking in water. Or we can run across it as fast as we can, stomping our feet down with each step. It should be like running on solid ground.'

'Ah,' Finlay said.

'Why go slow when we can go fast?' Sam asked with a smirk.

'Oh good. I should have said we only had one option,' Jake grumbled. I smiled at him.

'Let's get some of this vegetation out of the way so we can get a running start,' I suggested. As we cleared a path to the opening, some of the wolves stuck in the quicksand made it to the other side and some made their way over using long sticks they used to swing themselves over with.

'I'll go first,' Sam offered.

'Remember, the more force you put in your step, the better. And if you sink, move slowly to the other side,' Jake told him.

'I'm going to have so much fun with this,' Sam said before he set off.