

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

Chapter 60

The days after the second game passed by fast. We kept to ourselves most of the time. Finlay and Sam had met up with the Cayote Hill pack to talk about a possible joint feast in spring. I had spent my days training, relaxing and strategizing with Jake. We were both worried about the games, which would be more mentally challenging going forward. If the physical games were this strategic, then how hard would the strategic games be? I was sitting on the sundeck out back, reading. Sam plopped down in the chair next to me and took my book.

“Hey!” I objected and tried to snatch it back.

“You need to relax. We are doing good, it’s okay to do other things than prep,” he told me, keeping the book away from me.

“I know we are doing good. I’m trying to make sure we continue to do so,” I said.

“We will. All of us are motivated, you had us preparing for this for years. If we haven’t learned it by now, it’s too late,” he pointed out. I sighed.

“You’re right. But when I do it, at least I feel like I’m doing something.”

“You are. We all take our cue from you. When you are calm, we are calm,” he said, leaning back in his chair, enjoying the sun.

“I think you have mistaken me for the Alpha,” I told him. He chuckled.

“No, Amie. You and Finlay may be close, but not so close I can’t tell you apart. Finlay is our Alpha, and we always look to him to lead us. But you have a bigger influence on the pack than you realise. You have been our stand-in Luna since you arrived. At this point, it’s lucky he hasn’t found his mate. I honestly don’t know how the pack would react to a Luna who won’t be you.” I was left speechless. I just looked at him. He glanced at me and laughed at the look on my face. “I know

the both of you have messed up family issues at the moment, but you really should just let him mark you and save us all

from this guessing game. If you could do it in about four weeks, on the Monday, I would be grateful.”

“Don’t tell me you have a bet going on?” I asked him.

“Sure I have. Most of the pack is in on it. But I’m thinking as we are friends, you wouldn’t mind making sure I get the win.

Not so much for the money, mostly for the bragging rights.” My first instinct was to scold him for participating in the betting. But I changed my mind and laughed instead.

“If I would ever let anyone mark me just so someone could have the bragging rights, it would be for you,” I told him. He grinned.

“Why are you grinning?” Finlay asked as he came walking.

“Amie just told me I’m her number one person,” Sam said.

“I did no such thing!” I objected.

“You did. You just used other words, but I know what you meant.”

“Give me back my book so I can throw it at you,” I told him. He just laughed.

“I’m off to call Medow to report my mission was a success and I have stopped you from working yourself stupid,” Sam said as he got up. He headed for the cabin, whistling and looking very pleased with himself.

“My book?” I asked.

“You will get it back when we get home,” he answered.

“Want me to make him give it back?” Finlay asked as he took the seat Sam had been in.

“No. He’s right. I hate to say it, but he is. I have already read the thing four times. I won’t gain anything by reading it a fifth,” I admitted. Finlay smiled.

“I get it. We all feel restless,” he told me.

“I wish they had placed the games closer together. We would not have these endless days between them and we would be done sooner.”

“It’s so we can rest and be at our best. And give the packs with wounded members a chance to heal,” he reminded me.

“I know. It still sucks.”

“It does,” he agreed. “At least the next game is tomorrow.”

“Yeah, it will be nice to have something to do.” There was a silence as we both looked into the trees surrounding the cabin. “Going to tell me what’s up?” I asked.

“My mom suggested dinner the day after tomorrow with my brother, my aunt, me and her,” he told me.

“Oh. How do you feel about that?”

“I don’t know. I’m split. I don’t look forward to eating with my brother, but I would like some time to talk to my mother. We have barely spoken since I left. And if Aunt Matilda is there it feels a little better.” There was some silence between us

again. “Would you come?” he asked.

“To your family dinner? Would I even be allowed?” He gave me a weak smile.

“You are family. I want you there and my aunt will like the idea as well,” he told me.

“If you want me there, I will be there,” I decided.

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“Thank you,” he said on an exhale.

“You have supported me through my messed up things. The least I can do is be there for you. We are a team.” He gave me a steadier smile.

“We are,” he agreed. “I will tell aunt Matilda and then my mother.”

“Where is the dinner being held?” I asked.

“We said it would be best to do it on neutral ground. My mother booked a room in the communal building. She and aunt Matilda will both be bringing food.”

“Sounds like a good solution. If Matilda is cooking, I made the right choice.” My phone rang and I saw it was my dad.

“I can leave,” Finlay offered.

“No, stay,” I said. “Hi, dad. What’s up?” I answered.

“Hi pumpkin. I was just talking to your brother about how he was doing before the game tomorrow and now I need to check in with my brilliant daughter,” he told me. I laughed.

“I’m doing good. I am a little antsy from just sitting around, so it will be nice to get a go at it,” I said.

“A chip off the old block. I hated the days in between the games. If you had a diplomatic discussion or two, it was okay. But just sitting around and waiting always made me cranky.” It struck me that for the first time, we had access to

someone who actually had done the games before.

“Do you have any advice to give on how to get through the games?” I asked my dad.

“That is a dangerous question to ask me. If I begin talking about my glory days, you will be stuck with me for quite a while,” he warned me with a chuckle.

“I don’t mind,” I said as I stood up and sat down on the armrest to Finlay’s chair so he could overhear what my dad was saying.

“The first thing to remember is each game will almost always test more aspects than the ones described. You can earn a lot of points for showing off strengths you have,” my dad started. Finlay hooked his arm around my waist and pulled me

down into his lap. A small yelp escaped me.

“What was that, pumpkin?” dad asked.

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“Nothing. Go on, you were talking about extra points?” I said as I glared at Finlay. He just smirked and listened to my dad as he continued to explain how we could earn points.

“So, just because they don’t tell you they will look for tactical thinking or teamwork in the beginning of the game. If you show it off, there is a good chance they will up your points. They always look for teamwork and that the team utilises each member’s strengths and balance up their weaknesses. Do that and they will give you high scores. Easy points,” my dad told us. I hummed to show him I was listening. He moved on to the next subject. His advice was layered with stories about his times in the game. I had heard them before, but they took on a new meaning now.

“Thank you dad. I really appreciate you letting me pick your brain like this. As a new pack, we don’t have anyone with this experience,” I told him an hour later.

“It was my pleasure, pumpkin. I have enjoyed talking to you and I alway enjoy telling my stories to anyone who will listen. And pumpkin?”

“Yes dad?”

“I have heard you and your pack are doing well. I don’t think you need to worry too much. It’s important to have some fun as well.”

“Thank you. Has Elder been gossiping about me?” I asked.

“Please. The two of you never told on each other. I have other sources. I heard about the council’s decision as well,” he then said.

“Yeah, that one hit hard,” I admitted.

“According to what I have heard, you shouldn’t see it as a bad thing. According to my source, the council made the decision to put this matter to rest once and for all. They seem to have a lot of faith in your Alpha and in your pack in general. I would say they are expecting you to end up in the top fifteen and when you do, Alpha Ryan won’t have a case for forced unification ever again,” dad explained. I was silent as I didn’t know what to say. I had never seen it like that before.

“Thank you, dad. I needed to get perspective on the situation,” I told him.

“Happy I could help.” We said goodbye and I looked at Finlay.

“If that is true, it puts a new light on things,” he said. “You have an amazing father.”

“I really do,” I agreed. I relaxed back against him. “This new way of looking at our situation makes me less anxious,” I confessed.

“It does feel less like we are being haunted by some scary thing in the shadows,” Finlay said.

“We can do this. We will tell the team about the tips and tricks my dad told us. Then we will take on game number three tomorrow and we will be amazing,” I decided.

“I like how you think.”