

The Hunted Wolf – Chapter 12

ADIRA

I looked to each side, realizing that I was the only wolf here, since Darian had taken the others to circle around the campfire. I hadn't completely disarmed the trap yet either. I had to do something fast before this hunter alerted his friends. I should have realized there was a missing person. I would have been able to recognize this man's face and put two and two together to realize he wasn't with his friends around the campfire.

"I would be careful if I were you," I warned, keeping my voice as steady as possible. I had escaped from this man once before, so I knew I could do it again.

"Ah yes, be careful of a woman? That's real funny there." The man had a beard and was much taller than me. Under normal circumstances, he could overpower any woman. He didn't realize to what extent I was not a normal woman.

"Have you forgotten what you're facing? I'm not just a woman."

He had seen me use my magic earlier, but I had a feeling this man didn't know what I was. I needed to use that to my advantage by playing up my wolf side.

The man slowly lowered his crossbow to me. "I haven't forgotten. Haven't quite figured out how you escaped my attacks earlier. Must be a fast she-wolf, but you still aint nothing. Just a graze of this arrow dipped in wolfsbane, and you're mine."

"You'd have to hit me first," I taunted.

The man grunted and pulled the trigger on his crossbow, just as I anticipated. I shifted a few feet away before the arrow hit me. It landed in a tree behind me with a thunk!

"Chris! What the hell?" the female voice shouted from the camp. "You almost hit me with that stupid crossbow of yours!"

Before the man could respond, I shifted behind him, grabbing him by the neck. I twisted to the side to use his weight against him, and flipped him to the ground. I quickly stepped on his neck, cutting off his vocal chords.

"You chose the wrong wolf pack to attack," I said, digging my foot into his neck.

His eyes bugged out of his face just enough to show the panic seeping in. His face turned bright red as he struggled to breathe. I was confident I had him pinned to the ground. I just needed to incapacitate him in order to continue disarming the trap. I went to hit him on the head, but he grabbed my leg, pulling it out from beneath me. I landed on my back with a thud, right next to him.

He got up faster than I expected, already loading his crossbow.

"What the hell are you? You ain't no normal wolf. She ain't say nothing about no freak wolf girl," the man babbled.

"Who didn't tell you?" I asked. A sinking feeling settled in my stomach, and I knew there was more to this than I originally thought.

"The girl who paid us all to get rid of the wolves in town. It don't matter now. You're dead." He pulled the trigger to the crossbow again.

I rolled to the side, the arrow just barely missing my head.

"Chris?" the woman called again.

I was running out of time. I kicked the back of the man's knee, sending him wobbling forward. All of the training I had done with Mark was sinking in. I hopped to my feet, and kicked the man's back. He easily fell face-forward to the ground. I was shocked at how easy it was to take this man down. I expected much more of a fight than this. It was going to be easier to eliminate the hunters than I had feared.

"Wolves!" another voice shouted. Echoes followed the shouter, and I quickly realized there were even more than five hunters here. They had planted more people around the camp, and the camp was clearly a decoy for us to attack.

I kicked the man again, and dove for the trap. I was out of time. I focused on the blue energy, bringing it clearer into view. I then imagined absorbing the

explosive power, weakening the trap wire. I was two thirds of the way done when I heard another click of a trigger being pulled.

I shifted out of the way automatically, my heart racing as I stared at the bolt sticking out of the ground where I had just been. That movement was completely instinct, and if I hadn't done that, I was sure I would be dead.

I heard fighting erupt from all around me. Wolves snarled and humans cried out. I looked around at the chaos ensuing. I had to do something and fast. It wasn't supposed to happen like this. The man tried to shoot me again, but I quickly rolled out of the way. With a deep breath, I held out my hand and created a ball of energy. I threw it at the man, and he dodged my attack.

"The f**k?" the man shouted as he hit the ground. "You some sorta demon, ain't ya?"

I was surprised he hadn't realized that I was a sorceress yet. I thought the use of magic would be a dead giveaway, but perhaps the sorcerers were better at staying out of the human radar. I threw another ball of energy at his feet, this time making a direct hit. He cried out in pain and grabbed his leg. I dashed over to him, kicking the crossbow out of his reach. Just to make sure he couldn't use it again, I threw an energy ball at it, causing the wood to splinter as it flew in several directions.

"I'm not a demon." I stood over the man, feeling the anger rise in me. I heard wolves cry out from all around me, and I knew there were several injuries. "I am the luna of the Aphelion Pack, and I will not let a hunter like you threaten my people."

Power rose inside of me, and I could feel my body burning with energy. The man crawled backwards with wide eyes. It looked like he was scared for the first time in his life. I knew my eyes were glowing; they always did when my power surged through me like this.

"St-stay away from me!" His voice broke and his body shook.

He made a mistake by coming here.

Mark, make sure everyone stays away from the main camp, I linked. I knew Mark would be able to communicate and spread the word to everyone faster than I could.

On it, he responded.

I knelt down next to the shaking man. "Tell me who hired you."

The man spat at my face, but I quickly shifted to his other side, avoiding the spit. "Why'd I tell you?"

I created a ball of energy and held it in his face. "Because I'm not someone to mess with. I'm done being pushed around. So tell me who is threatening my friends and family."

The man gulped. "I don't know her name. It was some blonde chick."

My chest tightened hearing this. I knew one blonde girl who might want to attack this wolf pack. "Why did she send you?"

"Didn't say, and I didn't ask. She waved a lotta money, and I'd take any chance to kill ya filthy mutts." His demeanor changed, as if remembering his goal.

His arm moved suddenly, and I felt a sharp pain in my thigh, causing me to cry out and fall to my knees. I looked and saw a knife sticking out of me. I was too distracted with questioning that I didn't even see him grab the weapon. He pulled out the knife and swung at me again. This time I was prepared and managed to dodge his attack.

I changed into wolf-form, ignoring the pain in my leg. I wouldn't be able to do the next attack without Shadow's strength. I hoped Mark had managed to spread the word by now, because I was out of time. Once I was in my wolf form, I felt Shadow emerge.

You know what to do, I said to her.

He's going to pay, she growled in our head.

We grabbed the hunter's leg and tossed him towards the trap. When his body hit it, an explosion erupted. I felt the heat before feeling the force of the explosion. Shadow and I were tossed back several feet, hitting the ground hard. We rolled several times before stopping on our side. I couldn't hear anything but a ringing in our ears. The world seemed to be spinning, but after a moment, everything steadied.

I looked around, trying to figure out what was going on around me. The hunter I had thrown into the trap was lying face down, fire burning on his back. I saw others looking around at him.

“Chris!” the female from earlier cried out. She went to run over to him, but a werewolf jumped out of thin air, taking her down.

Screams of the hunters echoed around me, and I knew the werewolves now had the advantage over everyone else.

We need to find others and help them out, Shadow said.

Let’s go.

We ran around, looking for an ongoing fight, but as I ran around, I came across a wolf who was injured. I changed back into human form and knelt down next to her. I didn’t recognize her, so she had to have been from Jori’s pack. She was whimpering in pain, and I saw the arrow sticking out of her side. I was confident she had been poisoned with wolfsbane as well.

“Hold on,” I said.

I looked up to the sky, seeing the moon peeking out behind some clouds. It was only a half moon, but it was enough to give me extra energy. It was still hard for me to heal others, especially fully, but I just needed to make sure the wolfsbane didn’t kill her.

I pressed a hand on her forehead. Her body was burning, and her forehead was covered in sweat.

“I’m sorry, but this is going to hurt,” I said.

She didn’t respond to me, but I knew I couldn’t wait for her to approve. I grabbed the arrow in her side and quickly pulled it out. She screamed in pain and wrenched her body. I immediately put my hands over the wound and started focusing on the breath. I breathed in the rays of the moon and pulled energy from the light. I imagined moving the energy through me and into her body, eradicating the poison and stopping the bleeding.

My veins cooled as the energy moved through me and into her. My body shivered, feeling drained of energy from healing her. I pushed through, knowing I needed to hold out just a moment longer.

Her breathing steadied out, and when I moved my hands, I saw that she was no longer bleeding. She would still need more medical attention, but she would be okay for now.

“You’ll be okay now,” I said. Her eyes were closed, so I wasn’t sure she was still conscious. I looked around to make sure she wasn’t in immediate danger. I wanted to stay with her, but if there was anyone else that could use my help, I had to find them.

I stood up and started moving through all of the fighting, but something caught the corner of my eye.

I turned and looked in the direction I saw the shadow, and this time it was still there. It looked like a silhouette of someone, staring at me from a distance. I became painfully aware that someone had been watching me. Without thinking about what I was doing, I found myself running towards the figure.