

The Viking'S Mate Hunt

Chapter 11 RUN!

Suddenly I felt so very aware of how light we were clothed. Feet bare, a loose white dress in thin fabric fell down to our knees. The dress had small straps over our shoulders, making us look even more naked. My heart was beating so fast and hard that I could taste the thud between my lips. Eyes burned on my skin from behind, staring at us from all directions. Hungry, focused. Greed lust that took in our every curve. Every inch of exposed skin.

I felt naked. Clenching my jaws, I did my best to forget, to close out everyone but myself.

The man from last night, whom I had to call Alpha, stepped out on the open field between us and the dense forest.

«Ladies! »

His voice reeked of power and demanded attention; I couldn't look away even if I wanted to. It was like I could feel the other girl's nerves on my skin and taste the anticipation in the air.

"Today, we honor the goddess, the magical bond between male and female. Today we open the hunt!"

I jerked as people cheered behind me, howled, shouted, and whistled. I worked against my own instincts to turn around; I glued my eyes to the Alpha and the old lady beside him. The old lady that helped me take a bath the night before. He lifted his arms, and the crowd turned quiet again, but the air was filled with that excited, touchable energy.

"Our lucky girls are ready, cleansed to give their mate a fresh start, cleaned to honor the moon goddess, and clothed in the simple maiden's dress to honor our ancestor's traditions. The rules are simple and the same as always. The unmated males that are attending, you wait here until the clock turns eight and the sun is on its way down. When the darkness takes over, the beast's hunt! There is no killing our blessed girls; there is no unnecessary violence; remember, the girls are allowed to defend themselves; it only shows the

goddess that you are worthy of her gifts! The fight is welcomed! Cheerish it, a strong mate with fight in her is a blessing.”

Howl and cheering filled the open field again, and the hair on my neck stood straight up. They all made it seem like we were willing victims like this was what we wanted. A blessing, an honor. Suppressed females, the weaker sex. What a cliché! I clenched my fists to keep my mouth shut, my eyes still glued to the old woman that was now staring back at me.

Her expression is blank as she holds my stare. She wore an old thick gown with a wide leather belt around her waist. The skirt seemed to have several layers, and, in her belt, there was a curved dagger and a little letter pouch. Golden rings on her fingers, several necklaces and her hair pulled back in a tight braid decorated with flowers and sea shells.

“I will now talk to each and one of you and see you off! Till then, wait!”

The crowd now busted out in chatter, low mumbling, some laughing. The mood around the field was good, people were happy, excited and filled with bubbling energy. The complete opposite as the mood on the field. Around us. Knees were shaking, tears streamed, sobbing, fright and panic filled the air between us.

My eyes teared from the old lady first when I heard the blond I met earlier cry out. The alpha cut her arm! Not deep, but it started bleeding, fuck! They are using our blood to track us down. I quickly looked back; the old lady was now grinning at me. One by one, they cried or whimpered before they started running. The people behind us turned more and more restless and louder.

I followed the girls back, and they all ran in panic, straight for the wood, straight ahead. Determined to create as much space between themselves and the beasts as fast as possible. My heart pounded against my chest as the alpha came closer.

Suddenly he grabbed my wrist and twisted my arm around,

“The goddess blesses you; your blood will lead your mate to you. The one meant for you.”

I could no longer hold back, and a scruff that left my lips, my blood boiled under my skin, and it felt like it was itching. He arched a brow at me but

lowered his silver dagger; I've never felt this helpless and infuriated at the same time. These people were sick! My jaws clenched, and I bore my eyes to him as he pressed the sharp blade down on my cold skin.

What was women for them? A game? a fun trophy? Hidden beneath the sacred tradition was a lack of respect for woman. Their so called mates.

I hissed a little as it pierced my skin, thin blood drops dripped, and he slid the blade down. It created a thick bleeding line on my arm. I tried jerking my hand back as he was finished, but his grip held it in place. With a frown, he leaned closer and smelled me, then he shook his head and let me go with a simple command.

“RUN”

I didn't hesitate a second, but I ran straight for the old lady. First, my back was facing cheers and howls; then, right before I collided with the old lady, I could hear the alpha shout my name. I didn't stop; there was no time to waste; the old lady just stared at me, and not before I slammed straight into her did it seem to occur to her that I intended to run her over.

We both fell, the air was knocked out of her, and I could hear someone call my name again—the Alpha. My name roared and vibrated on my skin; I quickly got up and headed straight for the dense forest. Glancing over my shoulder, I saw several help her up, just as I disappeared between two trees, she realized her dagger was gone. And I barged into the woods with a smile on my face.

I'm not going down without a fight!

I'm not going down at all!

Nobody came running after me, not yet anyway; good, I stopped right inside the forest line and pulled my dress over my head. Gaps and howls reached me, and I locked eyes with the alpha as I bent down, folded my pants legs down, and pulled the sweater over my head. Cocky and childish as I felt, I flipped him off and winked, well aware he could still see me before I turned around and ran.

Thank the gods I managed to hide my clothes under this thin excuse of a dress. In one hand I had the little dagger, in the other a pair of those leather boots things they all were wearing.

