

The Viking'S Mate Hunt

Chapter 13 Going back

I ran on adrenaline still with that silly smile plastered on my face, even if I knew it was a short-lived victory. As I ran deeper into the woods, the adrenaline pumping through my pulsating body began to feel like panic, and not before I ran up to one of the girls that had fallen did I stop. She was crying, so I helped her up, but speaking to her was impossible. She was so deep down in her own panic, so devoured by her own fear, I didn't think she even knew I was there. With one hand clenching over her bleeding cut, she pushed past me with her elbow, and I fell on my back right into a thick bush.

Of all the places, that's where I ended up catching my breath. I just lay there and felt my heart pounding in my chest. Slowly the pulsating rush in my ears faded, and my heart stopped trying to break through my rib cage, and I just listened. I watched the clear blue sky; what was I doing? I freaked out, like a deer caught in the headlights. Closing my eyes, I took a deep breath; calm, I was supposed to stay calm! Around me, the forest was about to wake up, with birds singing, bees, and grasshoppers.

Hustling that massive bush, I managed to turn around and crawl out of it, and I looked down at my bleeding cut. Fuck, this marked us. They would track us down like bloodhounds. Unfair, they could most likely follow the scent of fear; it was thick and sickening on all the girl's skin. They were leaving a glowing trail with every step they took. Looking up, I wondered how much time had passed, one hour, Two? I had no idea; with a huff, I decided to try to wrap those leather shoes on my feet. They were already soaring, and I did not need them to bleed too.

Sitting there, behind the bush, trying to force those idiotic shoe things to stick to my feet, I ended up throwing one of them to my side in a burst of anger. How hard can it be? Even those overgrown dogs managed it! Crawling over to get it, I spotted something orange beside the bushes I just had been rolling around in, and I nearly jumped up and made a little happy dance! The grass Luca fed me the night we slept on the ground, yes! Finally! I studied them for a long time to make sure they looked the same as before; I picked several fists and wrapped them in bundles with some long straws.

This was a good start! Head in the game, I need to get my head in the game. Because that's precisely what it was, a game. I managed to wrap those shoes around my feet, and I was surprised at how comfortable they were!

But now I had the grass that hid my body heat and smell, which would most definitely come in handy. I munched on a fist of orange-spotted grass as I walked around and searched the bushes. They still made me feel sick until I finished them all, but just as I did, I found what I was looking for! A little flower with red petals! Quickly I picked the first one, but after looking at my cut, I picked another one, plucked the red petals, and rubbed it between my palms until it turned to thick blue slime. But then I stopped, and the smile was back. Collecting the slime in one palm, I used the other to pick some big leaves.

I rubbed them all on my bleeding cut, staining them with my blood before I covered my arm in the thick slime. With the orange-spotted grass under my arm, I walked back through the bushes and started tracking where I had been running. Then I cut off the trail to the left, making sure to drop a leaf every now and then; I knew this was the direction of the ocean.

Before, in the village, I could smell the salty wind swooping over the place and the sound of the waves crashing against the rocky side—a perfect way to lead whoever follows my smell off my back.

As I reach the end of the forest, I found myself standing on a bare field, and the salty, moist water hit my face like a brick wall. Perfect!

I let my eyes rest on the beautiful ocean, the sun rays dancing on the vivid waves, and my heart took a double take! Oh god! The sun! How much time had I used? I drank in the view a last time before I spun around. I trailed back the same way as I came, and as I ended up where I met the crying girl, my heart started to beat faster. Time was going too fast!

Every fiber in my body screamed at me as I started to go in the direction of the wolves. It was too dangerous to go from the place I had touched so much, even with my little decoy trail. With heartbeats in my throat, I jogged back in the wrong direction as long as I dared go. It was a dangerous plan, but it will work!

I took off and walked further into the woods, towards a chain of mountains. The weather was hot, the sun burning, and as I made my way out of the dense part of the forest, I noticed there was a river separating me from the mountain.

I'm a great swimmer, and I need some water, so this was not a problem for me! It was also an opportunity to wash my sweat off; for all I knew, they could smell that too! But I realized it might be long until I find running water again. Just following the river down would be too dangerous, too obvious, and make me too easy to spot! With a heavy heart, I cut one of the pockets out from my wonder pants. It was perfect for carrying water. Cutting off some of the leather straps on my shoes, I also managed to tie the top so I would not spill it all.

Just as I reached the foot of the mountain, the hairs on my back and neck stood. Dusk was here, and suddenly the woods filled with howls.

Their coming!