

## Chapter 0201

As I take another shot to the head I risk moving to look Wyatt in the eye. "Any day now big guy." He huffed a laugh and started to move again.

"Whoa! This sh\*t is slippery." he shouts in my ear as his foot almost slips off the rope in front of him.

"Don't try and step, slide your feet like ice skating, same with your hands. Move quickly, they've stopped shooting, probably to reload." I say to the pair behind us as much as to Wyatt.

We finally make it to the platform, but the trainers have reloaded and now we have to make it down among the new wave of paintballs. As Wyatt sets me down I notice more than half our team is still up here.

"What are you guys waiting for, an invitation? Get down the ladder!" I shout at them.

They all jump like coming out of a trance and start to scramble down one at a time. It's still slow going now that the trainers have targeted the rungs of the ladder making it slick with the oily paint.

We get to the bottom followed by the last pair and then we take off running. I keep up with Wyatt, not really sure where to go, but figure we must be trying to cross some sort of

finish line.

"Time!" Warrior Nickolas shouts. "Not bad. Circle up everyone, let's talk this out." All the teams that just ran the course ran over. The people in the front took a knee so the rest of us can all see and hear clearly. "Team one, you successfully made it across with all of your team members today with the ropes expanded to eight feet apart. Team two, you also completed the course, and faster than team one. Both teams used the one-by-one method all of you have been practicing for the last few weeks. Team three, you chose to try a different method, which earned you an additional phase of attack." There were grumbles around me, but I don't really understand why. "Can anyone tell us why the additional attack was needed?" Warrior Nickolas asked as if no one was making a sound.

Audrina raises her hand, then starts to speak. "As a team the buddy system was getting us across faster than the one-by-one method, but that also made the human backpacks vulnerable to other outside attacks. The paintballs were used to slow us down on several different fronts. The people carrying had to fight the slippery rope and those riding unfortunate enough to get shot had to hang onto their slippery partner."

"Correct, good observation. How did team three adjust to the attack? What was done right?"

"The two that were riding shifted to the front to protect the


partners crossing the bridge, which lowered the risk of falling, but the riders took an onslaught of hits." The woman who called me the 'new toy' earlier answered.

"Uh huh. What could have been fixed? Skylar, I'll let you answer this since you took the brunt of the attack."

My eyes went wide, I was not prepared for the attention. I make eye contact with Audrina who gives me a squinted look, probably trying to say 'don't f\*ck this up Newbie.'


"I think having more of our team on the ground neutralizing the attackers would have helped and we may have suffered less hits and would have cut our time down some. The paintball attack was clearly something that no one was expecting and it caught everyone off guard. Maintaining awareness in the chaos and staying focused on the objective until the assignment is complete is probably the biggest lesson here." I finish, not looking around since the whole group has gone completely silent. Nickolas gives me a smirk and then looks over to Warrior Osiston.

"Why did no one try to stop the trainers from firing on your team?" Warrior Osiston asks. "You all stopped to gawk at the two pairs that were being pulverized by thousands of paintballs. And we each unloaded about a thousand rounds." He looks pleased with himself and I had to fight an eye roll as I noticed the blue color that is the most prominent color dripping from me happens to match the paint in his gun. He had far too much fun shooting me the

 +10 BONUS

jackass.

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