

Chapter 54: Returning Home

Quinton

I raced home, only to find my pack dead or gone. I smelled Warren's Beta, so I know he ran this attack. Warren rarely, if ever, attacks, so it hadn't occurred to me that while I was away, he'd send his warriors to kill mine, but it should have. He killed Thomas and he must know that we're after his mate now, so he's gone from being defensive and reacting to attacks, to becoming offensive and actually attacking, and he's doing it very effectively. I should have considered that he'd do this, but I hadn't. I've become just as complaisant as Thomas and now my son is paying the price. 1

I knew Quirin wasn't dead, I'd have felt the tether to him snap. But I was hoping that Yasmin would have hidden him. Since I didn't feel my tether to her snap either, I assumed that was the case. However, when I arrived home, I searched the packhouse for them. The safe rooms hadn't even been used. I saw all the, chairs, cups and alcohol outside. My Beta was having a fucking party while I was gone and hadn't bothered to protect the pack. It's a good thing he's dead or I would have killed him myself.

When I realized my son was gone, I lifted my head and howled. What's left of my warriors echoed my howls. Some of them are outside, mourning the death of their mates as they hold their lifeless bodies. The others are like me, they'd been hoping to find their mates and pups in the safe rooms. When they hadn't, they'd started searching the packhouse, but no one is here. No one that survived anyway. Warren's Beta is obviously more thorough than my previous

Beta.

I mentally reach out to my pack. Nearly half of them are gone. Half of the ones left are weakened by the deaths of their mates. Those that are left are anxious and angry, wanting to go after their mates and pups, just like I do. But I can't attack Warren's pack like this. I haven't smelled any blood that wasn't from my pack members, which means that his pack didn't even get injured in the attack. They came in, killed what was left of my warriors, and got out. Fast and, apparently, easy.

"Alpha, there are three vans gone," one of my warriors whose mate and pup are missing says to me.

"So, Warren has taken prisoners. We need eyes on his pack. I need to know what's going on."

"We need to kill him," my warrior snarls.

I turn, snarling louder and forcing his submission. "Don't think for one moment that your pup is more important than mine. He has my son too. We will make sure they don't intend to execute them, but I don't think he will," I say, turning away.

Warren isn't like me. I'd have killed Harold's pup and not given it a second thought. But not Warren. He has my pup and now I have to be very careful about how I attack him. I won't risk my son and Warren knows it. 1

Warren POV

All the way home, I held Yara in my lap. She'd fallen asleep almost instantly, so I'd leaned my head back while I held her and slept for the

short drive home. Having her in my arms, even after everything that has happened in the last couple of days, makes me feel at peace. It's a feeling I'm unused to, but I never want to live without it again.

When we arrive, I wake her up.

"We're home, baby. Why don't you go get some sleep..."

"No, I need to go check on our patients here. Now that Savannah is gone, I'm limited in what I can leave for others to do."

I stroke my fingers down her cheeks. "Okay, let me know when you're done. I need to check in with Charlie and then I need to go talk to Quinton's mate and son. And then...you're mine," I say, making her smile.

"And you will be all mine," she says.

I lean in, kissing her softly before moving to her ear. "I've got news for you. I was all yours from the moment I laid eyes on you in the forest," I whisper, enjoying the shiver that runs through her body at my words. I can't wait to find all the places where I can touch her to make her body respond like that to me.

I watch her as she pulls away from me, holding her hands until they tug out of mine, then waiting for her to turn and head to the hospital.

"I'll go with her, Alpha," Bradley says.

"You need sleep Bradley. Quinton will come and when he does, I need you rested and at full strength. I'm sending Archie to watch her. When the attack comes, you get to her."

"Yes, Alpha," he says before heading inside to sleep.

When I turn back, Charlie and Haynes are waiting for me.

"Haynes, report," I say, walking up. This was his first time leading the pack and I want to know how things went, how he thinks he did as a leader.

"Alpha, all was well, except..."

'Warren, Farrah's gone,' Yara says in the mind link.

"Except Farrah?" I ask him.

"Yes, Alpha. The patrols got her scent when they passed where she crossed our borders. I had them follow her scent for about a mile to make sure she wasn't lying dead somewhere, but I didn't want to risk leaving the pack open for attack, or our warriors getting ambushed, so I pulled them back when it seemed like she was trying to get away."

I nod. "She wasn't a prisoner, so she was free to leave, although, I wish she'd have stayed. I'm sure she's not completely healed yet."

'She left the pack lands, Yara. I'm sorry,' I reply to my mate. I can feel her sadness.

'She'll most likely die on her own,' she says. 1

'That's what she wanted. You did what you could, Yara.'

I hold the link open, wanting to know that my mate is alright. I know

for her, this feels like a failure even though there's nothing she could have done to prevent it.

'I'm holding Piper, but I'm releasing Laney, just so you know.'

I look back at Haynes. "Your mate's being released."

He nods. "She stopped using the crutches yesterday."

"Is Farrah the only issue you had?" I ask him.

"Yes, Alpha."

"You did well, Haynes. Go celebrate with your mate," I tell him then turn to Charlie.

When Haynes doesn't move, I look at him, raising an eyebrow.

"I'd like to see how Beta Charlie reports so I can do a better job next time, if you ever give me another chance to lead the pack that is," he says.

I look back at Charlie and see his lips twitching. I know that Haynes is on his list as a potential Gamma.



Cooper Author

You get two today...

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