

Their Warrior Luna

Chapter 5

Ten years later:

Keep going, Harley. Keep going. My legs were aching, and my lungs were desperate for air. A huge old oak caught my eye. Launching myself into it was a clever idea until the bark bit into my already aching flesh, digging into my palms and bare feet. I can't let myself focus on that now. Keep pushing. Climb. Branch by branch, I climbed until the branches were getting too thin to hold my weight, yet still, they were too close. I feel them closing in on me like a predator after prey. Slow your heart rate. Breathe. They have to be under me by now.

The air around me shifted into something else, something thick and scary.

"Come out, little bird." The tone in Axel's voice made me tremble.

Like hell, I will. They don't know you are here, Harley. Don't give in.

Snap

Fuck. They are climbing the tree.

"We see you, little bird. Let's talk." Atlas's dark voice made my heart start thudding again.

My brain started swirling with panic, and the urge to vomit made me dizzy. They found me. My brain buzzed with ideas to get me out of here and away from the twin terrors that were hell-bent on ruining me.

Snap

The branches below me were swaying. Creaking and groaning with their added weight. What do I do?... What do I do? JUMP! I gave in to the voice, singing a

clear escape for me. What is the worst that could happen? I either break my legs, and they finish what they started, the fall kills me, or... I get away.

I didn't give myself a second to let my fear make me back out. I leaped through the branches. Falling... Falling.

Thud

A groan wracked my aching chest; my duvet and sheet wrapped around my legs, leaving me tied up on the floor. Sweat had my hair glued to my forehead, and sleep still nipped at me even after all that. My brain wanted me to run for my life. In my mind, I was still that fragile sixteen-year-old little girl.

The softness of the carpet and the sound of the rain swallowing the city kept me grounded in reality. Tears burned in my eyes, a catharsis I would not allow myself. Get it together. They don't get tears... they don't get anything. I scrapped myself off the floor with a groan tossing my bedclothes back to where they belong, making my bed before I let myself address my body screaming for caffeine.

Even after ten years, the nightmares still haven't stopped.

I took the stairs by two, anxiety in my bones like a corrosive substance begging me to melt away. The smell of freshly brewed coffee bounced around the kitchen, making me moan.

I wasn't sure what time it was, but I noticed the orange hadn't kissed the sky yet.

I took my coffee to the bedroom with me, a part of me still begging to hide away. My reflection caught my eye in the floor-length mirror. My long black hair hanging down around my waist is a mess. My soft pale skin was covered in inked lace and flowers wrapping tightly around every curve, dancing around every inch of my skin mixed with images of death and drama perfectly coexisting in a storm of chaos and control.

Andrew came through my door in a huff, his clipboard glued to his chest.

"I just can't live today. Can we just stay in bed?" he puffed, throwing his clipboard down anywhere, placing his coffee on the nightstand, and burrowing into my already-made bed.

This has become routine for us. We caffeinate, complain, and then move forward with the day.

"I do not understand why you, who should be the head warrior of this pack, or better yet should be gamma, let's be honest, and myself, the undeserving gamma, have to train this pack! I hate it... like, I love it, obviously. But I hate it." He blew, flipping his hair to the side.

"You are an amazing gamma. I could not be a gamma and would just rather not. The only reason I am even a decent warrior is that I am constantly very bitterly angry. Lastly, we train the pack because it is our job." I sipped my coffee, giving him the same speech I have had every morning for six years.

Byron busted in next, also not knocking. Taking the other side of the bed by Andrew.

"What's on the schedule for today?" he stole Andrew's coffee, earning him a whine from his best friend.

"Training." I huffed, searching the bottom of my closet for the Adidas I had seen yesterday.

"You really shouldn't be so dry with your alpha Harley." He puffed up.

"Ohhh—I apologize, alpha. I meant to say that we are doing the same shit we do every day. It's just a different day. Now give him his coffee before his tears stain my silk sheets." Byron and Andrew have been my best friends since the day of the incident that left me in their pack territory.

Byron was just seventeen then. Still, in training to take the alpha role one day, I was just a scrawny sixteen-year-old girl whom his father pitied.

He deflated at my defiance, letting a sigh out behind a smile.

"Let's get to it then. I have back-to-back meetings today, so I will not be around, and don't you two forget, we have Amari's birthday dinner tonight at six." He walked out, ruffling my hair even worse on his way out.

Even after Byron found Amari and Andrew found Clayton, they still treated me like I was their little sister. I adore being able to have them despite everything. Andrew was still rambling as I went into the closet, putting on a black sports bra

and training shorts. I can't find my Adidas, so I grabbed my ratty-ass converse and laughed when Alex's drama died immediately so he could add his two cents about my hideous footwear choice.

Reluctantly we made our way to the training grounds to set up for today. Thankfully for me, today is weaponry and battle in human form, which is my forte, considering my wolf went dormant after the incident. I haven't been able to shift since. I know she is still with me; I feel her from time to time rustling in the darkest parts of my mind, but never anything more than that.

As we began, I let the fear and anger left over from my nightmare fuel me through the training. Giving me an extra boost to search for something new to learn or a way to improve my techniques. After training, I ran home to shower and dress for Amari's dinner. I couldn't decide what to get her, so I settled for a designer bag in her favorite color.

Only thirty minutes into dinner, my phone rang. Which is odd, considering the people I talk to regularly are already here. The name flashing on the screen had anxiety in my throat. Damn... it's Denny.

"Excuse me, guys. I need to take this." I excused myself, reluctantly dragging my way outside.

The cool night air whipped in soft tendrils blowing my hair around.

"Denny. It's been a while." I see no point in formal greetings with anyone in my family. I love them, but after I left Clearwater pack with no intention of returning, the way they began viewing my life and choices was nothing short of judgmental despite my success here.

"Harls... it's time to come home." His voice was like a quite melancholy tune.

I tried to hide the indifference in my tone, but he knew I would rather die than face the Grimm twins. Not to mention, Axel and Atlas Grimm would rather kill me than have me on their territory.

"That isn't possible." I deadpan.

"Harley... mom and dad were killed in a rogue attack last night. I need you... we... need to make their arrangements. I can't do this alone. You've been granted access back into Clearwater. Come home."