

Chapter 706 Mysterious Voice

The wolves surrounding the group didn't number in the dozens or even fifties—there were hundreds of them, forming a suffocating circle that pressed in from every direction. Even though the rescue team had brought weapons with them, they were catastrophically outnumbered by this massive living tide of predators.

Finding themselves completely trapped inside this deadly ring of fur and fangs, a heavy sense of doom settled over everyone's shoulders. Looking down at the ground beneath their feet, they suddenly understood the horrifying origin of all these scattered bones. Perhaps every owner of these bones had met their end being torn to shreds by this wolf pack.

The bones were bleached white and brittle with age, clearly having rested here for several decades at a minimum. There was no possible way to determine what time period these victims had come from, or what desperate circumstances had driven them so deep into this cursed forest.

Every muscle in the group's bodies tensed like coiled springs, their survival instincts screaming warnings.

"Look at how many people died in this exact spot," Jason observed, his voice barely above a whisper. "There must have been an absolutely brutal battle here. This forest is concealing some kind of major secret—it's definitely not the empty, uninhabited wilderness that everyone believes it to be."

Cole responded with a small, grim nod of agreement, "Whatever mysteries this place is hiding have absolutely nothing to do with our mission. Let's avoid getting pulled into something we don't understand. Our only goal right now is to fight our way past these wolves and get everyone back to safety."

But at that moment, Elliana's voice cut through the tension. "I don't think escape is going to be quite that simple. Someone here doesn't want us to leave."

Both Cole and Jason whipped their heads around to stare at her in unison.

"What are you basing that conclusion on?" Taylor asked with confusion written across his face.

Elliana's gaze remained locked on the massive alpha wolf that stood at the front of the pack. "Wolf packs operate under strict hierarchy with their leader at the top, but this alpha has obviously been broken and trained by human hands. That means these wolves aren't acting on natural hunting instincts—they're following orders from whoever commands them. We're dealing with someone who possesses extraordinary skill in controlling wild animals."

The words had barely left her mouth when a chilling laugh rang out through the forest—definitely a man's voice, dripping with dark amusement.

"What an impressively perceptive woman you are!" the unseen man called out, his laughter slowly fading away. "To recognize immediately that these wolves are under direct command... You have remarkably keen observation skills and an intelligent mind. I haven't encountered such a brilliant and beautiful young woman in many, many years."

At the sound of this mysterious voice, everyone spun in circles, desperately searching the area for any sign of the speaker. But beyond the solid wall of wolf bodies surrounding them, there wasn't a single human figure to be seen anywhere.

"What a pity," the man continued, his tone now heavy with cruel satisfaction. "Even the most intelligent and attractive woman will breathe her last breath in this forest today. You could have remained perfectly safe in your comfortable, civilized world, but instead, you chose to invade my sacred territory. The penalty for such trespass is death—every single one of you will pay that price."

With those final words, the mysterious voice went completely silent.

The wolves began advancing once again, narrowing the circle with each deliberate step.

There was absolutely no time to waste trying to figure out the identity of the unseen man. The only thing that mattered in this moment was

staying alive through whatever came next. The group forced all thoughts of the strange man's threats from their minds, channeling every ounce of their focus and energy toward the savage beasts closing in around them, preparing to fight with everything they had.

Of course, somewhere in the back of their minds, they all still clung to a fragile thread of hope—praying that some kind of miracle might occur to shift the impossible odds in their favor before the killing began. The wolves were simply too numerous and too vicious. An actual battle would almost certainly result in catastrophic losses among the team.

But no divine intervention materialized to save them. The wolves launched their attack, and absolute carnage erupted on all sides.

Across the bone-littered clearing, a brutal war exploded into motion. Metal blades sliced through the air and gunshots echoed off the ancient trees, dropping wolf after wolf in their tracks, but the seemingly endless wave of fur and razor-sharp teeth just kept coming without pause. The air became thick with the savage growls of attacking beasts mixed with the agonized screams of men as, one after another, members of the rescue team were dragged down to the blood-soaked ground and ripped apart by multiple sets of jaws. The entire scene transformed into a nightmarish vision of pure violence and death.

Even though Elliana was four months into her pregnancy, she moved through the battlefield like an avenging spirit. Her body became a weapon of calculated destruction, every strike landing exactly where she intended as she worked to keep the people around her from being torn apart.

Cole's chest tightened with concern every time he caught a glimpse of her fighting. He threw himself into battle with reckless abandon, trying desperately to position himself between her and the wolves, to create a protective barrier around her body, but the sheer number of attacking predators made it impossible. He found himself constantly swarmed from multiple directions, unable to carve a path through the writhing mass of fur and teeth to get close enough to truly guard her.

Jason faced an identical nightmare. Every fiber of his being wanted to abandon his current position and fight his way to Elliana's side, but Taylor had virtually no combat training whatsoever and would be slaughtered within seconds if left alone. Jason had no choice but to remain anchored to that spot, continuously deflecting attacks that

would have easily killed Taylor.

Even someone as legendary and fearsome as "Death Thorn" had physical limitations that pregnancy imposed on her body. When Elliana spun around to avoid the charging attack of an enormous gray wolf, her balance betrayed her. She lost her footing completely and crashed hard onto the ground, causing two bracelets to tumble from her clothing and land silently in the trampled grass.

She immediately tried to roll and push herself back onto her feet, but a sharp, stabbing sensation tore through her lower belly, freezing her movements completely.

The wolves surrounding her instantly recognized her moment of weakness. Half a dozen of them abandoned their current targets and launched themselves directly at her.

"Elliana!" Cole's voice ripped from his throat in a primal roar as he completely abandoned the wolves he'd been fighting and started sprinting toward her with every ounce of speed he possessed.

Jason's face transformed into something cold and deadly as he, too, broke away from his defensive position and charged forward.

But before either man could close even half the distance, something utterly inexplicable occurred. The wolves that had been mid-leap toward Elliana's throat suddenly stopped as if they'd slammed into an invisible wall. Their jaws snapped shut on empty air. Then, as though some unseen force was physically dragging them backward, they scrambled away from her in chaotic retreat, putting a full ten meters of distance between themselves and her fallen form in mere seconds.

Cole arrived first, sliding to his knees beside Elliana and carefully helping her rise to her feet. "Are you hurt?" The words tumbled out in a panic-stricken rush.

Elliana pulled a small tablet from her pocket and swallowed it without water. "I'm fine."

Cole released a long, trembling exhale of pure relief as he wrapped his arms around her in a fierce protective embrace. He turned to position himself between her and the wolf pack, his muscles coiled and ready for the next wave of attack, but what he witnessed left him completely



stunned. The entire pack was withdrawing from the battlefield.

The living ocean of snarling, snapping beasts began flowing backward into the forest shadows, and within just a few moments, every single wolf had disappeared as if they had never existed at all.

When the forest finally fell into eerie silence, Taylor lowered his makeshift weapon, his face twisted in complete confusion. "What just happened? Why would they suddenly retreat like that?"

"Whoever controls them ordered them to stand down," Elliana explained, her voice remarkably calm given what they'd just survived.

Taylor's bewilderment only deepened. "But that man literally just threatened to kill every one of us. What could possibly have made him change his mind so completely?"

Elliana's eyes dropped to the ground. She gestured toward the two bracelets resting in the crushed grass. "Perhaps these are what changed everything. He must have spotted them when I fell."

Right on cue, the mysterious man's voice drifted through the trees once again, though the threatening quality had vanished completely, replaced by a tone that sounded almost respectful. "Ms. Marsh, please accept my most profound apologies. I had absolutely no idea who you were, and I have clearly committed a grave error in judgment. I sincerely hope that you escaped serious injury. You have my solemn promise—no harm will befall you anywhere within these woods. You are free to travel wherever you wish without fear."