

Lesson 7- Ask for help when you need it—no one knows everything.

"Shit." Laura groans and tries to pull herself to her feet before immediately collapsing back to her chair.

"Shit." She repeats again.

"There's no way you can go tend the bar. You're too burned out from the binding spell." Kyle insists, stopping her from trying to get up again with a hand on her shoulder. Laura collapses her head in her hands and groans.

"I know." She sighs.

"Call in Catcher?" Torin suggests. Laura shakes her head.

"I can't. He's off tonight and he has his kid so there's no way he would be able to come in." She stares at the ceiling as if praying for a solution.

"I would offer to help but..." Kyle trails off.

"You're needed in the kitchen." Laura jumps in. She answers so quickly that I doubt that's the actual real reason. I wander towards where Torin is standing and ask him.

"Why can't Kyle help behind the bar?" I wonder.

"Ah... Kyle isn't so good at... Customer service. He loses his temper and somehow ends up starting more fights than he prevents. We've tried him



at the bar before but it's never gone well." He explains, letting out a deep breath. I would almost call it a sigh but his poker face game is too strong to show that kind of emotion. I can't help but giggle and Torin blinks at the sound, even furrowing his brow a little bit. Maybe his poker face isn't perfect after all. Maybe he's just subtle with showing emotion. He's a lot less demonstrative than most. I'll figure it out. Torin straightens up and takes a step towards where Laura and Kyle have started bickering about options. The two of them immediately fall silent even though he hasn't spoken yet.

"Kyle, take Laura home. I will manage everything here. It's only one night." He orders. The two of them stare at him a little nervously but neither of them answer. Neither of them go to move either.

"Is there a problem?" Torin asks smoothly.

"No, no... Not at all. It's just... You do remember what happened last time you tried to manage the bar... Don't you?" Laura asks awkwardly. Torin waves off her concerns with a hand.

"It'll be fine. If that happens again then so be it." He looks a little annoyed. Something about the tension in his shoulders makes him seem uncomfortable. Still, he stares the two of them down until they agree to leave.

"Are you alright here Carina? I can stay if you really need me?" Laura offers. I shake my head and plaster on a smile.

"I'll be fine here with Torin. And please, you can all call me Rina." I answer cheerfully. Laura is nice, but she seems to think that I need a babysitter, or maybe a buffer between myself and Torin. I'm not worried.

"I'll see you later. Get some rest. Apparently magically locking a person in a building is a lot of work." I joke. But it must be too soon because her face falls.

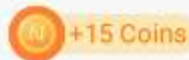
"I really am sorry about that." She says with puppy dog eyes and I can't help but melt a little.

"I agreed to it. I'm not happy about it all, and it would be way better if I could have my phone back, but I'll make do. You go get some rest, okay?"

To my surprise, Laura pushes away from where she is leaning on Kyle and takes a wobbly step towards me. She pulls me into a tight hug that lasts a second longer than I'm really comfortable with before releasing me and returning to Kyle's side.

"I will see you tomorrow afternoon too." Kyle grumbles at me, although he sounds less happy about it. I bet he's just jealous that I got a hug and he didn't.

"Have fun taking Laura home." I say in a teasing tone. He goes SO pale. Alrighty, apparently his crush on the redhead witch is NOT common knowledge. He glances at her but she didn't notice my odd tone. She waves and the two of them head off, although Kyle is still glancing back at me as they go, his expression a warning not to say anything further.



Once they're gone, the place seems a lot quieter and the sounds from the bar sound louder. Torin gestures for me to follow him.

"Come on, I'll show you the tavern area and get you a drink. You probably need one." He mutters the last few words and I laugh.

"Probably." I agree. I know I'm pushing it but I can't help myself. I dart forward and link my arm through Torin's.

"Lead the way." I smile and I am rewarded with both a furrowed brow and him blinking at me twice. Yep, apparently the best way to throw Torin off guard is just to be nice to him. That is definitely something I can manage. It might even be fun. I always did like finding the most shy child in a group.

I like to try to draw them out and convince them to join in and participate with everyone else. I already concluded that Torin isn't shy, but he is definitely a bit withdrawn. I can't help but want to meddle. We head towards the noise and Torin pushes open a wooden door. It opens to an area behind a bar in what I can only describe as an old fashioned looking tavern. It's kind of amazing.

If I had to design a tavern for some fantasy video game, this is what I would make it look like. There's a big fire against one wall, comfortable seating, tables for meals and a well stocked bar. If I look carefully I can see modern touches here and there. An electronic exit sign, a fire alarm. Just small things but they're barely noticeable and all have practical purposes.



Even more interesting than the actual tavern are the people inside it. A lot of them look like normal humans, although from what I understand, that doesn't necessarily mean that's what they are. If humans aren't meant to know about this place then I'm fairly sure that none of them are human. Others have claws, wings, and interesting skin tones. I can't see them all closely but there is nothing normal about these people.

As Torin and I enter, the room falls silent. It's kind of creepy. I mean, this is a bar, people have been drinking. But just the sight of Torin has them freezing in place and zipping their mouths. Torin steps up to the bar and I wait in the doorway, not wanting to get in the way.

"Laura is unwell and will not be able to continue working tonight. Kyle is escorting her home so the kitchen will be closed. I will keep the bar open until our regular closing time." He announces. I expect a rush of people to the bar.

I mean, it's been unattended for like forty minutes while they all took care of me so people have to be wanting drinks. But nope. Not one person comes to get a drink. A few people eye the bar, but then they see Torin standing there, and immediately look away. I see now why Laura thought it might not work out so well having Torin serve the drinks. Well... Maybe I can help?



Comments



Error Collection



Share Chapter