

Chapter 104

There was a dead silence the moment Ava walked into the arena. She couldn't stop her cheeks from heating up as she kept her head down and walked quickly towards her section. It didn't help matters that Zeke was right behind her with his Gamma and Beta. They had separated at the door the other times, but now they seemed to follow her to the bleachers.

Were they making a statement of sorts? Did it not worry them that they looked like they were breaking the rules by giving an Omega preferential treatment? That their Alpha looked like he was cavorting with a human? She would get so much hate from the other Omegas for this.

And, most importantly, someone would tell the Council about this. If they had their spies here, as Mr. Patrick said, then she had failed miserably to stay off their radar. What exactly were they looking for? Evidence that they had killed Claire and her friend? Was the end game to take their lives like they had taken the other wolves' lives? Mr. Patrick had been too cryptic when they had talked. Maybe she had done the impossible when she beat Dexter, but everyone saw that had been thumb luck. There was nothing exceptional about her.

Zeke, on the other hand, was very exceptional. She had known he was different from the first night she saw him. Maybe the Council's interest in her stemmed from the fact that Zeke was interested in her.

After she tapped out of her match, she would find Mr. Patrick if she could somehow get rid of her entourage. She needed answers.

When she approached her section, she looked up and saw the coach's cold gaze. This time, he also directed that same look at the wolves behind her.

"Is there a problem. Coach Baxter!" Zeke asked.

"None at all. But get back to your section: you don't belong here," the coach sneered.

The coach and Zeke had a better relationship when the term started. It looked like Zeke's life at Phoenix Academy had been much better before he decided to move her into his house and openly associate with her. He should have kept his distance. After all, he had more to lose. Once she left, he would have to continue his studies here to be allowed to be his pack Alpha one day. She didn't want to take that from him after everything he had done for her.

She sat without looking at them and waited for the matches to start.

One week. She could take whatever insults they threw at her for a week, and then she would disappear with her dad.

The murmuring around the arena started back up again as her housemates walked back to their sections, and then, finally, the coach blew his whistle to silence them.

“First matches, Beginner level finalists against Intermediate level finalists. When I call your name, pick your weapon and step into your ring.”

And as always, her name was called first. She didn't bother looking at the coach because she knew what she would see in his eyes, but once she got to the weapons, she realized they had removed everything previously assigned to the beginners.

The coach had made them practice with one weapon with the understanding that it would be what they were evaluated on for now until the final evaluations, when they were expected to have expanded their repertoire. The earlier evaluation date had changed the curriculum. She had no problems using any weapon, but what about the rest of her class? Would they know how to use these safely without hurting themselves or their opponent?

She didn't want to care about that, but not everybody had been an asshole to her.

“Where are the other weapons?” she asked, turning around to interrupt the Coach as he continued to call the names.

“What's the matter, Morgan? Can't play in the big leagues?” the coach sneered,

“You made us practice with one weapon and said that would be our evaluation weapon. This is so irresponsible. Weapons aren’t toys; people will get hurt.”

There was complete silence again as the coach’s gaze turned even colder. She could hear her heartbeat as everyone waited for the coach’s reaction. He had such a fragile ego that he couldn’t take being openly criticized, but his issue was with her alone. Why did the others have to suffer? She didn’t like most of them, but she had never been one to shut up when she saw something wrong.

“You’re more than welcome to yield right now,” Coach Baxter growled. “If you’re not, pick a weapon and shut your damn mouth.”

The coach resumed calling the names, and she watched as four other beginners came to pick their weapons. She saw the worried looks on their faces as they tried to pick weapons they were unfamiliar with, so she held back so they could pick first.

“If you’re unsure, pick something of similar weight,” she whispered to them “Something heavier would throw you off your balance, the same if it’s too light. Focus on your movements, and make sure your weapon flows with your whole body. Don’t try to be heroes; there’s no shame in tapping out. We’ve all done well.”

“Ava Morgan!”

She ignored the coach and gave her fellow beginners a nod as she picked a sheath full of throwing stars. They still looked worried but she hoped

they would tap out as she intended to do. She secured the sheath to her side and followed them to the rings without looking at the coach.

She didn't need to look at him to feel his anger and hatred. She could feel it scorching her as she slipped into the first ring and backed into a corner to wait.

When her opponent was called first, she finally looked at the coach and saw the smirk on his face. There was such joy on his face that she wondered why the other Instructors and faculty members weren't saying anything. His prejudice was so clear for everyone to see.

But she supposed they wouldn't care, either. She was worse than an Omega to them.

Her gaze went to her opponent when he picked his weapons, and then he turned to her with eyes full of ice-cold hatred and fury.

Douche Dexter.

She had been paired with Douche Dexter, an Alpha who likely wanted to kill her, as if her life meant nothing to them. She had humiliated him in front of the whole school, and now he had come to collect his pound of flesh.

Dexter had been arrogant and a joker in all their matches as he had effortlessly pummeled her. She had never faced him like this. He was cold, subdued and deadly serious.

He was there to kill her.