



Chapter 20

"Where is your sling?" Leo frowned as he looked at me walking gingerly down the stairs. The downstairs was one large room. Not that it was very big but the kitchen was on the far side and a small livingroom was in the middle.

"Upstairs." I said as I kept coming down the stairs.

"You are suppose to wear that for another week."

"Speaking of which, how many days have I been here?"

"Five." Ezra said as he shoved a garlic bread stick in his mouth. The food smelled amazing.

"Sit and eat. I'll get you your sling." Arlo said as he got up. I didn't clean up after myself fully so I was slightly embarrassed for him to go in that room.

Leo placed a plate in front of me and put a small amount of spaghetti on it. "Eat that and I can always give you more but I don't want your stomach to get upset."

"Thank you." Picking up the fork, I took a bit of the most delicious spaghetti I have ever tasted. Not sure if it was because I haven't ate in like a month or if it was because it really was the best.

"Here you go." Arlo put on the annoying sling.

"Thanks so much." I drug out.

Arlo smirked as he sipped on his coffee. " Anytime, princess."

"I'm not a princess."

"Technically you are until you are convicted. Now, I must say, we have all done very questionable thing. However, you sit here and are charged with the most heinous crime out of us all. Very impressive." Arlo smiled over his mug.

"First of all. I am innocent in all of it."

"Aren't we all." Ezra laughed as he kept eating.

Giving him my best glare, "Secondly, I watch my mom get killed so I'm not sure I have the patience to deal with your cock attitude." I looked at him point blank as I took a bite.

Arlo laughed out loud as Leo shook his head. "Don't get him started. He is pulling your leg. Waylon already filled us in."

"Yeah, you really got the short end of the stick." Ezra muttered.

"What did he all tell you?" Surely he didn't tell them we were mates.

"Just that you watched your mom get killed and your friends but your uncle is pinning the murder on you so you needed help escaping." Arlo summarized.

“And that he is your mate.” Ezra filled in which made me freeze.

“Didn’t want us to know?” Arlo asked.

“Is that all you do is drink coffee?” I didn’t want to talk about it.

“I ate earlier, you were slow coming down. Now answer the question.”

“We aren’t exactly telling people. Plus, he made it clear that he was taking a chosen mate, Jasmine.”

“Wow, no hard feelings there.” Ezra widened his eyes at my sullen tone.

“Let’s just say that my life hasn’t been a picnic and I don’t need a man in it to fuck it up. The only reason I am in the mess is because of Waylon. It was his stupid ass that made me go to his pack instead of allowing another architect to take over the project.”

“Hmm, and it was also him that risked his title and his beta’s title or should I say life to get your out of the palace.” Leo pointed out.

“It’s clear you guys are on Waylon’s side. Since he walks on water for you’ll, I think I will eat the rest of my food outside. I think I see a fire.” Slapping away Ezra’s hand, I carried my own plate outside and sat down on one of the wooden chairs. The fire felt nice on my face from the cool nights air.

The pain meds were kicking in, it was easier to balance my plate and still eat.

"I'm sorry if we upset you." Leo came out and sat across from me.

"You didn't. Not really. I have been in this position my whole life. I have never known stability, my own belongings or even the comfort of having a place to call home." Arlo and Ezra came out with a case of beer. "I have moved around from place to place, never staying more than a few months. My longest place was the last one that was a year. I always have a go bag and never have anything that has value, no jewelry or anything. Someone, I put myself through college and got an architect degree. I was working my way up to partner when I met Waylon. It was just another rude awakening to what is my life."

"That sounds exhausting." Ezra said. Arlo smacked him upside the head. "What? It does!"

"I'm sorry, he can be a bit... insensitive."

"It's fine." I had finished the spaghetti and set my plate down. Ezra grabbed a blanket and wrapped it around my shoulders. "So, tell me. Has the world lost their minds looking for me?"

"You are actually the most wanted fugitive in the whole United States!" Arlo said, almost proudly.

"So yes."



"Oh, here. I was suppose to give this to you when you woke up from your nap." Leo stood up and handed me the phone that Axel gave me. "Please text him. I am tired of their constant phone calls ever five minutes."

"Yeah, I'll call him. I think I am going to go to bed."

"Goodnight, princess!" Arlo called after me as I stood up to leave.

Flipping him the bird, I kept going. Their chuckles made me smile as I heard them say, "I like her. She is good for Waylon." Setting my plate in the sink, my legs were like jello as I made my way up the stairs and crawled into bed. There was only two contacts in the phone. Waylon and Axel.

Pressing Axel's name, I hit call. It ran a few times before he answers. "Hold on." There was some shuffling and voices but eventually, it was quiet.

"Charlotte?" Axel's voice sounded relieved.

"Yeah, I'm here."

"Are you okay? Waylon is with me."

Wonderful. "Yeah, I am fine. I just had some spaghetti and now I am laying in bed. Your friends are something else."

I heard Waylon chuckle. "They are but they will protect you. How are you feeling?"

"Sore but alive."

"Good."

"I bet my lawyer is pissed." I had a hunch they had something to do with her and I wanted to find out.

"Actually, it was her idea to get you out."

"So you did hire her for me."

Silence. "Don't be mad, we had to do something."

"Not sure why? It was clearly Jasmine's doing with Waylon's permission. I mean, she was clinging to him the whole time. That is, until I got shot and lost consciousness."

"Listen." Waylon spoke for the first time. "Jasmine backed me into a corner. She found out who you were and called them. She told me she would tell them I knew who you were and get me locked away too if I didn't take her as a mate. It all happened so quickly but I promise you, I will never take her and I want you. Charlotte, I want you in my life and beside me. I promise I am working on clearing your name."

He said everything I have always wanted a guy to tell me. The problem was, there was no way he could do what he was telling me. "As much as I want to believe you. What you are saying is almost not possible. I'm not savable. I felt you kiss her. Don't lie to me. I'm tired and going to bed. I'll call tomorrow." hanging up before they could answer was all I could do before the tears started.

I wanted nothing more to be saved. If only Waylon could

make it happen. Rolling to the side, sliding a pillow under my arm, darkness took over quickly.

The next morning, it was the smell of sausage that woke me up. As much as I wanted to stay in bed, I needed to pee. My stomach rumbled and my head hurt from sleeping too much.

After peeing, I looked at myself in the mirror. The bruises were yellowish and healing. The cuts were almost fully healed and I wasn't as sore. My hair was a lost cause though. After trying to brush it, I gave up and decided I didn't have anyone to impress.

"Look what the cat drug in!" Arlo called out.

"Good morning!" Ezra was laying on the couch watching some cartoon.

"Need any help?" I asked Leo.

"No, sit and I'll make you a plate. How is your stomach after last night. You look better."

"I feel better and it is starving."

"Today is nothing but a lot of relaxing with me." Arlo said as he took a bit of Bacon.

"Oh?"

"Yeah, Leo and I have some stuff to do. We should be gone all day and be back by night." Ezra called out.

"I don't want to know." Taking the plate from Leo, "Thank

you.”

“There isn’t much to do around here. You get some T.V. stations but there are some games you can play if you want.” Leo frowned.

Taking a bit of scrambled egg, I shrugged. “Nothing I’m not used to.”

“That’s the spirit!” Ezra said with too much enthusiasm.

“Ezra, how old are you?” I asked, looking at him like he was stupid.

“Old enough!” He got defensive.

“Come on. Let’s get going before you say something else.” Leo grabbed his arm and pulled him out the door. Going behind a tree, they got naked and changed into their wolves.

Arlo went over to the couch and sat down. He changed the station and settled on what sounded like an old western. We sat in silence as I finished my meal. Going to the sink, I started cleaning up the kitchen. I heard him sigh before the T.V went off and he walked into the kitchen.

“I can do that.” He said as he started helping. “Why don’t you go sit down.”

“I’m not handicap.”

“Technically you are.”

Touche. “Not enough to stop me from filling up the

dishwasher." Arlo cleaned up the food and set the dishes in the sink and I rinsed them off and put them in the dishwasher. He put some soap in and turned it on.

"Good. All done. Now, go relax."

"Yes, dad." I muttered as I passed him. Grabbing my phone from my pocket, I texted Axel.

Me: I'm awake and alive.

Axel: Good. I'll call in a second.

Me: You don't have to

As soon as I hit send and Arlo sat down, Axel called. "I just said you didn't have to." I said as I answered the phone.

"Hello to you to." It was Waylon.

"Ugh, I texted Axel. Not you."

"Tough shit. How's the arm?" Waylon ask. I heard Arlo laugh at me.

"Perfectly fine. If only they would allow me to take the sling off." I glared at Arlo.

"They are doing what is best. Can I talk to Leo?"

"No." I said no elaborating.

"I'm not in the mood, Charlotte."

"You are always in a mo-" Arlo ripped the phone from my

hand.

"This is Arlo. Leo had to run an errand."

"How is she really?" I heard him ask.

"Cuts are looking much better. Color has come back to her face and she is walking better. Her attitude never left her."

I heard Waylon chuckle. "Good. You know about it all?"
Waylon asked almost in a secretive way.

"I do and it is."

"Perfect." Waylon sounded happy. "Put Charlotte back on."

"He wants to talk to you." Arlo said as he handed me back my phone.

"Yippie." I muttered. "What?"

"Behave and don't give them too much of a hard time."

"Who the fuck do you think you are?" I was getting annoyed.

"ARLO, DO NOT LET HER LOSE HER TEMPER! IT WILL NOT BE GOOD!" Waylon yelled. Arlo registered what was being said as my eyes changed color. Quickly grabbing my phone, he hung it up and looked at me.