

Chapter 490

Violet

Rochwall was standing beside Commander Jorn at the front of the room. "The first mission of the year," Rochwall said, addressing the group, "is something truly special, and the kind of mission every squad is going to want. Unfortunately, we won't be able to send everyone, which is why Commander Jorn..."

He glanced sideways at Jorn. His eyes glared, like he didn't fully agree but had just decided to go along with it out of respect. A breath escaped him. "Your commander has decided that it would be a good idea," he continued, "to let you all battle it out between your wolves."

Jorn let out a wicked laugh.

Ah, no wonder he was in such a good mood today.

I puffed out a breath.

"One person from each team," Jorn announced, his eyes glowing. "You will shift in the woods, and will be running an open race," he said. "It will be near the school, which means the entire academy will be cheering you on."

Excited murmurs sounded around me. "At least we got Kylan," Nate said. Kylan let out a chuckle next to me.

I let my head fall against the side of his arm and looked up at him. I honestly couldn't care less about this race, and did not care which team would get the mission. Not that I was worried. I doubted anyone at this school was going to beat Valerius if it came down to a race.

The only thing on my mind was night. I wanted it dark again so I could sleep, dream, and that was it.

“So when do we start running?” a voice came from the side somewhere. “Lynx is itching to get out and win this thing!”

I scoffed hearing where the big talk came from. Cassian. He was the leader of Group 4, a Lycan from Aevanor, a fourth-year CSI major, and very insufferable. Especially when it came to wanting to be the best.

His three teammates were already cheering him on like he had won, slapping him on the back and ruffling his hair.

“Not so fast,” Rochwall smiled. He and Jorn glanced at each other. “Each of you will be receiving a pouch in a moment, and inside is a stone,” Rochwall went on. “Red means you are safe, and green means you are competing for your team.”

Jorn turned and grabbed a wooden tray behind him. There were small pouches lined up on it, all the same beige color and closed with a simple ribbon.

I groaned in dismay. My chance of pulling green was one in four, so I knew I would be fine. What were the chances of me possibly pulling something else?

Jorn started walking down the line, handing each group their pouches. “Do not look in them yet,” he instructed as he went.

Kylan nudged my temple with his shoulder. “You’ll be okay,” he told me.

“I hope so,” I exhaled. “Or else we’re fucked.”

Nate snorted while Dylan let out a small laugh.



Kylan did not.

'Excuse you?' Lumia spoke. 'Do not underestimate us, Violet!'

I almost rolled my eyes. "You better be talking about being exhausted," Kylan said.

"No." I shifted my head up a little to look at him properly. "I'm talking about the disadvantage. I'm not a Lycan, Kylan. I haven't been training my wolf for as long as Dylan, for example, has been training his," I gave him the truth. "If I have to run against three other shifters who have been at this their whole lives, we are not winning that race."

"Well, I disagree," Kylan mumbled. Right at that moment, Jorn appeared in front of us. He bent down with the tray in his hands and stuck it out toward us. A small smirk played at the side of his lips.

"Good luck, Hastings."

I forced a smile up at him. "Thank you, Commander."

I reached and took the pouch directly in front of me before throwing it into my lap, with not as much excitement. When everyone grabbed theirs, Jorn released a hum and walked back to the front of the room where Rochwall was waiting.

As I turned to Kylan, his eyes had narrowed.

He was looking at Jorn, then at me, and then they landed on the pouch in my lap.

"Do you want to switch?"

'Yes!' Lumia said immediately.



I let out a small chuckle.

Of course...

Kylan must have opened his already and seen green, and now he was trying to slip his into my lap so that I would be the one running. He felt bad about the nightmare situation, and wanted to do all of this to boost my confidence.

"No," I said. "I'll keep this one."

His face froze for a moment, but then he let out a short laugh. "Okay. Whatever suits you."

"Everyone!" Rochwall called out. "It is time to open your pouches."

He had barely finished before I heard the rustles around me. Cassian let out a loud scream, almost high-pitched, that made most look in his direction. His back was on the mat, legs swinging and kicking like a toddler while the green stone was clenched between his fingers.

Good for him.

"Red," Dylan said. "I'm safe."

"Same here!" Nate shared.

Kylan was quiet. A bit too quiet for my liking.

I had heard him open his already, but no words came out of his mouth. It made me nervous.

A gasp came out. What if I had mistaken his intention from earlier?

Jorn's smirk...



His words repeated inside my head. Good luck, Hastings.

In full panic mode, my head turned toward the front of the room where he was already looking at me. Grinning.

Anxiously, my eyes moved carefully to the pouch in my lap, and I picked it up. My fingers worked on the small string. I reached inside it, and carefully pulled out my stone.

And when I looked down again, my brows pulled together.

The stone was green.

"No, no..."

'Yes, yes!' Lumia sang.

Nate burst out laughing so loud some looked in our direction. Kylan shook his head chuckling. The corners of his mouth twitched as he couldn't decide whether to laugh or be worried.

"I asked if you wanted to switch," he said under his breath.

"Huh," Dylan said. "No mission for us, I suppose."

This was not happening...

My chance had been one in four. I had pulled the pouch directly in front of me, the most random one possible. My jaw clenched.

There was just no version of this where Jorm had not done it on purpose.

Rochwall called out. "Everyone who pulled a green stone, please stand up!"



People rose, but I stayed seated. I refused to stand. I was still sitting on the mat with the stone in my hand, waiting for it to magically change colors.

“Time to take your stage, Pup,” Kylan encouraged with a light chuckle.

Nate reached around from behind me. He grabbed my hand and lifted it up in the air for everyone to see. Now I had no choice but to stand up and scramble to my feet, still exhausted from the intense training we just had.

“Violet?”

“What, her?”

“Easy win for us!”

People let out surprised whispers, some laughing.

My eyes were on Jorm, who was looking back at me, the smirk still present on his face. I knew his praise during training had been too good to be true. He had done this to humiliate me, and knew I would be taking the pouch directly in front of me. It was a setup.

A humiliation ritual for a mission we didn’t even have the full details on yet.

“L..I can’t,” I said quickly, my voice loud enough for everyone to hear. “I’m not prepared. I’m not ready for this, Commander, I—“

A defeated sigh slipped past my lips. Rochwall’s face softened. He looked at me like he wished he could take it back.

Jorm shot me a fake pout. “Aw,” he said. “You can’t?”



I nodded fast. “No, sir, I really can’t, I—”

“Which is exactly why,” he said, cutting me off, “you will have two days to prepare instead of one. So that there will be no excuses, and so that everyone in this room ‘can.’”

Everyone burst out in laughter, and I just felt my blood boil. So they thought this was funny?

They thought my parents in a cave somewhere, and my eyes refusing to dream, and Jorn putting me on a stage I did not ask for, was funny? Okay, maybe not all of that because they didn’t have any idea, but still.

“You can all expect an official announcement. Class dismissed!” Jorn announced.

Everyone began standing while I stood frozen in my spot, the green stone still in my hand. Nate and Dylan had already walked away, and Kylan moved in front of me with a wide smile.

He pressed his hands into my shoulders. “I’m looking forward to seeing you run against three Lycans, Pup,” he sighed out. “Finally, some normal activity again.”

Some normal activity?

He was calling a werewolf against three Lycans normal? I had not even looked at who else had pulled green, but this sounded worse than losing the ability to dream.

‘Hmm. I’m not worried,’ Lumia hummed.

I ignored her.



"Can we please forget about this and get out of here," I exhaled, "and focus on the real important thing, which is my nightmares?"

Kylan's hand found mine, a small smile curling onto his lips. "Whatever you say, Pup."

We started walking to the locker rooms, but Rochwall moved in front of us before we made it. "Kylan, Violet!" he greeted. "It would be good for this team to win this battle," he almost whispered, leaning in closer. He gave me a wink. "For you especially, Violet."

Then he walked further.

For me especially...

Confused, I turned to Kylan. "What do you think this mission is?" I asked.

He shrugged. "I don't know...but I don't like that look on Cassian's face. So you better beat him."

"Yeah right," I cracked a laugh, giving him a slight push against his back to keep him walking.

"Honestly, dreaming about winning that race might be harder than dreaming about where to find my parents."

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