

Let's Not Die School

Elowen POV

Stormclaw South Training Grounds

Day One of "Let's Not Die" School

I hadn't even stepped onto the field before Taya jogged past me, grinning like a fox who just stole from the henhouse.

"They're hot," she said, already breathless. "Like... all three of them. Is this a training session or a fuckin' shifter calendar shoot?"

I followed her gaze across the field. Three wolves stood at the far end of the grass, already mid warmup, all muscle, scars, tactical gear, and that terrifying calm that screamed we could kill you with a leaf if we felt like it.

Ash, standing beside me like a tall, judgmental crow, barely looked up from his notes. "Those are Alpha King Draven's elite warriors. Do try not to drool." He drawled lazily.

"I'm not drooling," I muttered. I was totally drooling. One of them, tall, broad, covered in ink and carrying twin daggers, caught me looking and smirked.

I looked away fast enough to give myself whiplash.

Across the field, Daxon was already squaring off with the biggest of the three, rolling his shoulders like he was born for this shit, Jace and Rylen

were stretching nearby, both of them trying to act casual and failing miserably under the predatory glare of the warriors.

Taya gave me a thumbs up. "If I die, avenge me."

"Please, they'll flirt you into submission," I muttered.

Ash clapped his hands once. "Alright, hybrid. You're with me. Time to see what you're capable of."

"Emotionally? Nothing."

"Magically."

"Still nothing. But okay."

We stepped off to a smaller training ring etched with silver runes and chalk lines. Ash's magic was already humming in the ground, the air crackling as he reached into his coat and pulled out a simple wooden staff.

"Focus," he said, his voice low and sharp. "Call the silver light again. The same one you used against the Aegis agents."

I held out my hand, trying to remember the feeling, the moon pulled heat in my chest, the cool burn behind my ribs. I focused on the memory of that moment, when I thought I was about to die and something else had risen up to protect me.

A silver spark flickered in my palm. Then another. I grinned. "I did it."

And then my hand exploded. Not literally, but close. The silver light twisted into red, and a wet crack echoed as blood burst from the center of both palms, flaring out like two crimson ribbons into the air.

Ash froze. The others all turned, even the warrior wolves stopped mid-movement to stare as blood hissed against the training ward and sizzled.

"What the fuck!" I gasped, stumbling back. Ash stepped forward immediately, grabbing my wrists, his expression unreadable.

"This isn't moon magic," he said, his voice tight. "This is something else."

"What's wrong with me?" I choked out.

"Nothing," he said quickly. "You've bonded to me. My blood magic... it's bleeding into you. You accessed it."

"You could've warned me!"

"I didn't think it was possible! Suppose I'll have to reevaluate what we know about hybrids. We've never been able to study the mate bonds." He tilted his head. "I wonder if you'll be able to access all of your mates powers. This changes things."

I stood stock still, my eyes wide. Is this really happening. Just what I need. Magic I have zero idea how to control. Lyssira piped up in our mind link finally, she'd been resting. "We are going to be so powerful EI! You should be excited not afraid!" She pranced happily around wagging her tail.

I scoffed, "What do you know you aren't telling me Lyssi?" She hummed softly and said nothing. Of course. Daxon sprinted over, his shirt already soaked in sweat, his eyes scanning me like I'd just sprouted horns. "Is she okay?"

"She's fine," Ash snapped. "She just weaponized her own bloodstream."

Taya appeared beside him, panting. "Are we calling that fine? Because that looked like a spell from hell."

Rylen and Jace jogged up, both breathing hard, faces flushed from whatever hell Draven's wolves had been putting them through.

"Was that blood?" Jace asked. "Because I swear I saw it move."

"It did move," I said, staring down at my still dripping palms. "It didn't just explode, it curved. It aimed."

Ash nodded slowly. "Blood magic is alive. It remembers intention. You didn't just release power. You cast a spell."

I stared at him. "What kind of spell?" His mouth twitched. "Destruction."

"Of course," I muttered. "Because I'm the universe's favorite chaos magnet."

Across the field, one of the warrior wolves called out, "Back to drills! The hybrid isn't dead yet."

"Oh bite me," I yelled. The warrior winked.

Ash conjured a cloth and wrapped it gently around my hands. "We'll need to start training you in both. Moon magic and blood magic. Carefully. Blood work is volatile. It's not like elemental casting, it's instinctive. And dangerous."

"Sounds like me," I said weakly.

Daxon brushed hair off my shoulder. "You're doing better than most first year soldiers. They just piss themselves and pass out."

"Wow, thanks," I said snarkily. "Comforting."

Taya grinned. "Look at you, blowing up the practice field and still cute."

"I'm a blood drenched disaster," I muttered.

"A powerful blood drenched disaster," Ash corrected.

Lyssi yipped excitedly in my head. "Ash is pure perfection." She sighed. I grinned, because yea, he definitely was.

"And she hasn't even shifted today," Rylen added, eyes warm but cautious.

"That's coming too, right?"

Ash nodded. "We'll integrate combat shifting into the next session."

Jace clapped once. "Alright, who wants to place bets on which of us gets their ass handed to them first by Elowen?"

"You," Taya said instantly.

"I wasn't asking you."

I looked at the mess of blood on the warded grass, the stunned stares of Draven's top warriors, the fear in my own hands. Then I looked up at the people who weren't running. Not running away. Not running from me. And I smiled.

"Okay," I said, wiping my palms clean. "Let's go again."

Stormclaw Keep – Training Ring, Later That Afternoon

Ash's voice was low, steady, and way too calm for someone who just watched me accidentally explode blood like a warlock piñata.

"Again," he said. "Left palm. Focus. Only moon magic this time."

I exhaled slowly, my eyes on the small chalk ring in the grass in front of me.

I could feel it now... the difference between the two. Moon magic was... cool and luminous. It pulled from my chest, from something soft but endless. It hummed behind my ribs like a lullaby on the verge of becoming a storm.

I lifted my hand, exhaled, and reached inward...past the fear, past the noise, into the part of me that had lit up during the blood moon shift. Silver light swirled across my skin, soft at first, then brighter.

Ash smiled. "Good. That's your soul. Your heart. Your origin. The moon

magic is you."

Then he pointed to my right hand. "Now switch."

I blinked, startled. "Switch? Like... blood now?"

"Yes," he said, stepping closer. "Blood magic is different. It's not summoned. It's unleashed. It responds to intention. Purpose. Hunger."

I swallowed. "And if I don't have murderous intent?"

"Then use focus," he said. "Pick something worth protecting. Anchor yourself. Then command it."

I closed my eyes. This time, I didn't pull from my heart. I pulled from my spine. From instinct. From rage. From the moment Vaela turned her back on me. From the betrayal. From the quiet, steady promise in Daxon's arms that I would not be broken by it.

Heat surged through my veins. Lyssi growled her approval. My right hand ignited, not in flame, but in a dark red pulse that danced across my fingers like liquid lightning.

Ash's breath caught. "You're doing it," he said reverently. "You've separated the threads."

One hand silver. One hand red. Two sides of one soul. I stared down at my hands and felt... whole. For the first time in years.

"You're not broken," Ash said, stepping closer. "You're just built to carry

more.”

I didn't cry. But my throat ached like I wanted to.

Then I grinned. “So, what now? You throw me into the arena and make me wrestle a bear?”

Ash's lips curved. “Close.”

****Training Ring – Combat Field****

“Let's fucking GO,” Jace said, already bouncing on his toes like a six year old high on sugar and delusion. “C'mon, El. You and me. Friendly match. Just taps, no claws. First one to pin, wins.”

Rylen looked vaguely concerned. Daxon looked entertained. Taya was placing invisible bets with herself. I rolled my eyes and stepped onto the mat. “You're on, toast boy.”

He lunged. I pivoted. And five seconds later, I had him flat on his back, his wrist pinned behind his shoulder and my knee on his chest. “Fuck,” he wheezed. “Did you just..how the fuck”

“You said ‘tap out,’” I smirked. He slapped the ground. “Okay, okay! I yield to the hot magical beast girl!”

Taya hollered from the sidelines. “That was sexy domination, ten out of ten!”

I stood, brushing grass off my pants. My heart was still racing...but not

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from fear. From adrenaline. And discovery. I was faster now. Stronger. My vision had sharpened. I could hear the shift of birds in the trees and smell the change in the wind. Every part of me felt like it had snapped into place.

Ash nodded approvingly. "Bond strength. Magic awakening. Hybrid acceleration. It's all syncing."

Daxon smiled proudly. "Told you she was a wrecking ball."

"Let's run," Rylen said, his eyes shifting. "We shift, we run, we burn off whatever's still building in our blood."

Everyone agreed without question. We stripped in record time....shifter speed had perks...and in seconds, Lyssira exploded out of me in a ripple of silver fur and bright blue eyes and howled.

Zuki howled, and Taya's red wolf sprinted past me in a blur of firelight. Rylen's wolf Anton was massive and dark, with gold tipped fur and eyes locked on Zuki like she was the only thing that mattered.

Daxon's wolf, Talon was huge, powerful, midnight and smoke, and ran on my left. Ash didn't shift. He stood at the edge of the trees, his arms folded, watching like a sentry.

But I knew he felt every step. Every howl. Every pulse of wild magic in the earth as we tore through the woods like lightning, like prophecy, like fucking freedom.

By the time we returned to the Keep, we were covered in mud, panting and laughing, wolf energy still humming under our skin. Dinner was waiting.

But I was already full. Of power. Of pack. Of purpose.

And gods help Aegis if they thought they could cage this.



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