

Chapter 13

Meelo

Day 8

Grix sat on top of his bed and stared at the floor of his hut, contemplating what I had told him.

I awkwardly stood there in front of the wolf and was bothered by the long-lasting silence. I knew that it was a lot of information for Grix to process, so I decided not to say anything. I was now rethinking my choice of telling Grix about my brother's suicide and how that was why the Kreq wanted to kill me so badly. No, that was stupid. Other than Seq, Grix was the only Kyan I could completely trust with something like that. Or, at least I hoped that I could. It didn't matter now, though. Grix knew everything and I waited for him to speak.

"What do you think I should do, Meelo?" Grix finally asked me.

My ears flicked. What did I know? Grix was the Kyan leader, not me. "What does it matter what I think?"

"You were once a Kreq and your mother's the Kreq leader. If anybody can guess what their next plan would be, it's you,"

I paused and thought for a moment. Unfortunately, my mind came up short and I shook my head.

Grix sighed and rubbed his left ear with his hand. I wasn't sure if it was because he was frustrated or tired. "Well, from where I'm standing we have two choices. One, we could retaliate. But, we're few in numbers, so I don't exactly favor that option. Or two, we could give the Kreq one last warning. If we go that route, they might take it as a sign of weakness and decide to attack us anyways. So, either way we're in trouble,"

I was quiet, unsure of which choice sucked the least.

"I'll tell the patrols to pass along the warning to the next Kreq they see and I'll pick warriors for sentry duty tonight in case the Kreq do decide to still attack. You have my gratitude, Meelo. It couldn't have been easy to kill your brother's ex-mate,"

I shrugged. "Not really. The only tough part about killing her was that, when she was dying, I thought about my brother. I never liked her much, though,"

"Still," Grix said, "you put aside your own problems and saved lives. On behalf of the rest of the Kyan, I thank you,"

I slightly bowed my head and thanked Grix. After bringing my head back up, I turned to leave, but stopped when Grix asked me, "Your father, you said he's Riter's second in command, right?"

Stopped dead in my tracks, I turned back around. "Yeah. The Kreq have a leader and a deputy that lead the camp,"

Grix nodded. "Great. And I thought one was bad enough,"

After closing Grix's door behind me, I surveyed the Kyan camp. Since I entered Grix's hut, the entire camp had awoken and was currently attending to the morning rituals. It was strange. I had just killed someone and the world seemed to keep going. People were walking, eating and talking as they always did. Even the sun shined down upon us with its usual comforting warm face.

I decided to shake the peculiar feeling off and began walking down the snowy rows of huts, greeting my fellow tribe members.

Halfway to my hut, two hands unexpectedly covered my eyes. I stopped walking and was able to feel a warm stomach pressed up against my back.

"Guess who?" the owner of the hands asked me.

I chuckled. "Well, judging by how you're rubbing up against me, I'm guessing that you're Seq,"

A giggle erupted and the hands removed themselves from my eyes. I turned around and was met by a beaming Seq. I couldn't help but smile. "What do you know? I got it right,"

Seq wrapped his arms around my waist. "Yep! Now, come and get your prize,"

My smile doubled in size.

I leaned in and kissed Seq. After a moment of light kissing, Seq and I pulled our heads apart and gazed at each other with affection.

"You're such a dork sometimes," Seq teased.

"That's not what you said in bed the other night," I said.

Seq giggled mischievously at the memory and tightened the hug. "That's different,"

"No. I recall that you were particularly fond of me tugging on your tail,"

Seq only chuckled and buried his head underneath my chin.

I looked down at my boyfriend and let out a happy sigh. I brushed his cheek with my hand and purred. Seq brought out the best in me and I was grateful for that.

Can I ever tell him about my brother? The thought created a twinge of guilt that tainted the joy in my chest. How could I have told Grix and not Seq? Sure, Grix was the leader, but Seq was my boyfriend. I was supposed to tell him personal stuff like that. Shame burned my chest even more when I pondered how I could have told Seq about my brother's death before having sex with him the other night.

Seq interrupted my guilt-ridden thoughts. "Let's go back to your hut,"

I kissed Seq on the head. "Ok,"

We began walking together.

As we walked to my hut, I couldn't help but continue to think about not being open with Seq. With every step, I could feel the shame in my chest grow stronger and overpower my happiness.

"I told Grix about my brother," I blurted out.

Seq stopped walking and so did I. My imagination sparked various scenarios of what Seq could do. Seq could break up with me. He could scream. Seq might not even speak to me ever again. It was also possible that Seq would cry. My muscles tensed and my back arched as I waited for the fighting to begin.

"And?" he asked.

My heart felt as though it skipped a beat. "That's... That's it?"

"What's it?"

"I thought you would be mad that I told Grix about my brother instead of you,"

Seq shook his head. "Not at all. I know you didn't have the best family life, so I'm fine with you not talking about it,"

I sighed, slightly surprised at the fox's calmness. "I want to tell you about my brother,"

Seq's brown eyes grew large. "Oh, no, you don't have to if you don't want-"

"No," I placed my hand over Seq's muzzle. "I want to," I then removed my hand from Seq's snout and began talking.

As the words left my mouth, I felt an unnerving vulnerability rise inside of me that I had never felt before. The uncomfortable feeling made me want to stop talking since I knew Seq would understand, but I resisted the urge and I didn't leave out a single detail. I told him everything. He now knew about my brother's sexuality, Grym finding me and even the blood that ran between my fingers as Pytle died.

When I finished my story, Seq stood there silently. Without saying a single word, Seq pressed his mouth against mine and held me close to him. I didn't kiss back on account of me being so surprised. Instead, I only stared confusingly at my boyfriend.

When Seq broke the kiss, he looked at me. It wasn't until that moment that I saw tears ready to pour out of Seq's swollen eyes. "You poor guy," Seq said. He hugged me and placed his head on my shoulder. "It's not your fault," Seq whispered into my ear. "You couldn't have done anything,"

I brought my arms up and circled them around Seq.

He continued whispering into my ear. "Let it out,"

I sniffed and pressed my nose into my boyfriend's neck.

"It's okay," Seq comforted me.

I began to weep and let out a barrage of sobs.

"I'm here," Seq said.

After our tears had dried, we began walking again, this time in silence. We held each other's hands and I was comforted by the act of physical contact.

We were still planning on going to my hut, but were asked by Aether, Callix, Isabel and Vern to help cook some prey. So we sat down with our friends and instantly joined in the laughter.

"Hey, who wants to bring the pelts and pelts to Rye?" Isabel asked.

Seq raised his hand. "I'll do it,"

Isabel handed the fox the tiny stack of remains. Seq then stood up and began walking towards Rye's hut.

"I call dibs on the biggest piece!" I cheered, gleefully.