

Chapter 18

Rye Day 13

Why did I fucking cry in front of Meelo? How pathetic. Who cries in front of their ex's new fuck-buddy? I was regretting even asking the stupid snow leopard on a patrol. I had planned to screw with his head the whole time, but I didn't think he'd throw me against a tree and scream in my face. Why did I even tell him about how I fucked Basil? I caught that twinkle of pride in Meelo's blue eyes when I started to talk about that. *Fucking cunt*. I felt like picking up a rock from the snow and caving in his damn face.

Fortunately, I was able to stop crying like a girl on her period by the time we got to the border.

After a few minutes of searching, I couldn't find any tracks or a single scent of Kreq on the Kyan side of the border. I didn't need to ask Meelo what he'd found because I knew that, between the two of us, my nose was better. Knowing what Grix would say when we go back to camp, though, we kept looking to make sure we wouldn't miss anything. We still didn't find a damn thing. Yeah, big fucking surprise there. *And to think I could be jacking off right now.*

"Hello, Meelo,"

I turned my head to see a tall, godly looking lion standing on the edge of the border. *At least I have something to think about when I get back home.*

The lion casually leaned with his back against a tree, as though the three of us were all good friends bullshitting around a fire. The only thing missing was a smile spread across his face, which held a stone expression that, I swear to Taiya, made my asshole tighten up.

"What are you doing here, Dooka?" Meelo said, giving a low throaty growl that raised my hair and tightened my asshole even more.

"Why do you care? I'm in Kreq territory, so I can do whatever I want," Dooka said, standing up from his tree.

I could tell that Meelo still felt uneasy. Even I started to get a little anxious. What could a Kreq be doing so close to the border? My insides twisted at the question.

"Come on, Meelo. Let's go," I said, wanting to get out of there.

The snow leopard didn't seem to hear me.

Meelo walked forward until he was only one step away from the border and kept his eyes on the hunky lion. The snow leopard's chest stood outward and his shoulders held stoutly underneath his head. It didn't seem that we were going to leave quite yet. *Great.*

"Oh," the lion said, tilting his head to the side as his brown eyes sparked. "Are you going to kill me, just like you killed Grym and your brother?"

What? I didn't know who the fuck Grym was, but his brother? Meelo? I thought about it for a moment and realized that he wasn't the type of person who would do something like that. He was too much of a pussy.

Meelo didn't move. He didn't even flinch at the taunt. Instead, he started to speak. "All you ever did was hate me. Not once, did you or Riter ever say 'I love you'. You didn't even say it to Pytle, who was your favorite son, all because you thought it would make you look weak. But now, in the short time I've been a Kyan, I've received more love and acceptance than I *ever* did as a Kreq. Anybody can hide their feelings. But to be emotionally open with someone takes a lot of courage. It certainly takes more balls than not being able to tell your son or even your own mate how much they mean to you! The Kyan have also taught me something else, something much more important. It was a complete waste of time to seek *any* of the Kreq's approval. Now I know that I shouldn't try to get approval from someone who doesn't see me for who I really am. The only approval that I need is my own. I am who I am and I accept that. That's all I need and it's more than what you or any other Kreq gave me. The Kreq can go fuck themselves and I hope I never see any of you again,"

Meelo turned around and began to storm off.

As he passed me, I only stared at him. I gave the lion one last look and turned to leave.

"So, that's why the Kreq tried to kill you," I said, once I caught up to Meelo, who hadn't spoken since the border was out of sight.

Meelo snorted a cold stream of breath from his nose. "I didn't do it, but thanks for asking,"

"You don't seem like the type. The first time that I'd met you, I thought you'd jump at seeing a squirrel,"

Meelo rolled his eyes at me and I pretended not to notice. "If only the Kreq had half the common sense that you do,"

I laughed. "Actually, I wish that they were dumber. We could make them our servants or something, you know?"

Much to my surprise, Meelo gave a little chuckle at the idea.

The thought even stayed with me until we returned to camp and found Grix sitting alone at the fire, cooking a rabbit by himself. Meelo and I sat on opposite sides of the fire from each other, with Grix on Meelo's right side and on my left. Meelo took it upon himself to explain how we found nothing at the border, except for his the lion, which I discovered was named Dooka. I thought for sure that he'd bitch about me being a pain in the ass, but he didn't.

"Did Dooka say anything?" Grix asked, looking up from his food, which was cooking on a stick.

"Nothing really. He just tried to get under my fur," Meelo said.

"Hmm," Grix said, as he slowly rotated his squirrel above the flames that reached for it with long orange and yellow streaks. "I wonder what he was doing there,"

The only sound to fill the air was the crackling of the flames, as they slowly digested the wood inside their belly.

"How many Kyan know why the Kreq drove you out?" Grix asked his with ears pointed upwards.

Meelo thought about it for a moment and gave a shrug. "Just you two,"

Grix drew his rabbit from the fire and held it in front of his muzzle while he began to blow on it. "Not even Seq?"

"Oh, yeah. I forgot. He knows, too," Meelo said.

"That's good," Grix said, as he slowly rotated his food to see if it was done cooking.

"Um, why?" Meelo asked.

"Well," Grix stuck his prey back into the fire and continued, "I think that the Kreq might use your brother's death to cause problems. If a Kyan happened to be told that you 'murdered' your brother, they might react...unreasonably. The initial surprise of the idea of you killing your brother would also probably make it hard to convince them that it's a lie. Based on that, I think you should start telling people. That way, they know the truth and don't turn against you,"

Meelo grunted and rubbed his eyes.

"What do you plan on doing about the Kreq?" I said, finally breaking my silence.

Grix sighed. "Unless they trespass again, like they did when they came into our camp, I'm not going to do anything,"

"Oh, come on!" I almost yelled. What bullshit! They'd already tried fucking with us before. What more did he need? An invitation? "They've done everything but jam a stick in our eye! We have to fight back, give them a taste of their own medicine! We can't keep letting them fuck us in the ass anymore! If we do, they'll never stop!"

Grix's mouth curled into a snarl and bared his teeth at me. "If you've forgotten, *Rye*, I'm the leader of this tribe and that means that I decide what the Kyan do! And do I need to remind you that we hardly have any warriors? We shouldn't launch any kind of attack until we have no choice!"

I gave small growl, but did not speak.

Then, I stood up and made my way back to my hut. I could feel my tail and hackles bristle once I got to my front door and threw it open. I didn't need this shit.

I closed the door behind me and started to take my clothes off.