

In Darkness Retreat Day Two
Alice Winters

“I really thought that we were coming here to eat and sleep,” Lane says.

“That’s because that’s what I told you,” I say. “Since I assumed the same thing.”

“I *did* send you the itinerary,” Jenny reminds us as she stands in the door of our room.

At least day one of the retreat was amazing, what with me becoming a horse whisperer and taming a wild stallion which was actually a gelding, but no one else needs to know that when I recount this tale to *everyone*.

“I told Lane to read it. It’s not my fault he sucks at reading,” I say.

“Definitely my fault,” Lane says.

“Are you guys ready? They start in five minutes.”

“Where’s Robbie?” I ask as I reach back and take Lane’s hand so I can pull him through the doorway after Jenny.

“I don’t know, he was whining that his legs were sore.”

“How hard were you riding him last night? I thought I heard some strange noises coming from your room!”

Jenny and Lane look disgusted and Lane yanks his hand away from me like I’ve burned him. “From riding *the horse*.”

“I wasn’t sore at all. I must be conditioned from riding Lane. Lane were you sore?” I ask.

“Jenny, what if we just left? And... never came back for either of them. Do you think they’d find their way home?”

“Why am I being left behind?” Robbie whines as the door to his room opens. “What did I do wrong?”

“You encourage him and laugh at his jokes,” Lane says as Copper leads him after Jenny.

“I didn’t laugh this time! I was actually thinking about taking his advice and asking Jenny for a ride.”

“My legs weren’t sore, which means you’d have to ride *me*,” she says.

I grin. “Ooh, you better get the double wide strap-on out to break him in real good.”

Jenny points at me. “Excellent idea, Felix!”

“But... but... my asshole,” Robbie whines.

As we are discussing this no one notices that Lane has gotten into the elevator and purposely shut the doors before we can also get inside.

“Did Lane just leave?” I ask as I watch the numbers above the elevator go down.

“I think you pushed him over the edge,” Robbie admits.

I sigh. “Really? I talk about his sister doing his brother-in-law in the butt with a dildo and he runs but it’s okay for him to drag me after a drug lord? Does anyone see anything fair in this? No? No one?”

Robbie shrugs and Jenny just presses the elevator button. When we reach the first floor, I see Lane waiting there with Copper, forcing everyone to walk around him as he stands in the way. I walk up behind him and smack his ass, but he doesn’t even quiver.

“I always get so disappointed when you don’t jump or squeal or anything,” I say.

“I’m sorry, babe. Want to try again?”

“I do!” I give his butt another smack.

He jumps. “Oh my god? Who would hit a blind person! Why would you do that?” he asks.

Everyone in the room turns and looks at me.

“You’re evil!” I hiss.

“I’m sorry I was standing here, but... I can’t see *anything*. You could have just nicely asked me to move,” Lane says, voice sad and literally quivering. “I’m so sorry.”

It’s like the world around me has come to a stand still as everyone stares at me abusing the poor blind man.

“It’s alright, everyone. He loves it when I hit him. Say you love it, Lane,” I threaten.

“I-I love,” he says.

A worker makes his way over to us with concern on his face. “Is there a problem, gentlemen?”

Lane starts laughing. “No! I was just joking with him. Don’t worry. He’s like a Chihuahua. I can man handle him if I have to.”

Lane grabs onto me and lifts me off the ground like the only way to prove that we’re not in an abusive relationship is to show how much more powerful he is than his partner. “See?”

“We’re into S and M,” I explain, since I feel like I need to take ahold of this conversation. “We like to degrade each other to feel better about ourselves.”

“Right, I make fun of his small stature and he says awful things about me being blind. Like... he’ll ask me to read things... or ask how he looks...”

I start laughing. “You’re a *monster*.”

He grins at me. “Maybe.”

The man looks confused but decides that he’s had enough of playing hero for the day and quickly walks away.

“When you two are done getting off on having attention on both of you, lets go,” Jenny says as she drags us through a door and into an open ballroom.

There’s a new instructor today, which is great because I get to prove to someone else that Lane and I are the best couple here.

“Good morning! I hope everyone is having a wonderful time,” the woman says with a huge smile.

I raise my hand but Jenny immediately snatches it and pulls it down.

“Lane, control your man,” Jenny hisses.

“Nah, I just roll with it. It’s part of his charms,” Lane says as he pets Copper.

“Thanks, babe.”

The instructor continues. “My name is Maddie, and we’re going to be doing some trust-building activities! We’ll start off very simple, so go ahead, find a spot and sit down facing your partner.

“Ooh, trust exercises,” I say with a grin.

“Does Felix currently have an evil grin on his face?” Lane asks.

“Manic, really,” Robbie says.

“I do not! I’m just excited about doing something with my snuggleworm. Worry about your woman,” I say as I pull Lane down to a sit and scoot forward until our knees are touching. Copper decides that we’re *far* too close and squeezes between us. Content, he sits on my lap while panting in Lane’s face.

“My, Felix, your breath smells quite... meaty today.”

“Thanks. Maybe it’s from your sausage.”

Lane reaches out and pats Copper’s face with makes Copper wag his tail. “And your nose... why’s it so wet?”

“I like to lick it.”

“Ah... neat, neat.”

“We’re already bonding. I love this so much.”

He chuckles and pulls Copper off.

The instructor claps her hands together. “Alright. Take the hands of your partner, look them in the eyes and tell them a fear you have.”

“Don’t you dare ask how I’m supposed to look into your eyes,” Lanes says with a grin. I slowly lower my hand. “What? I wasn’t!”

He snorts. “You’re such a liar. Your hand shot up so fast that I was able to hear the air separating around it.”

I start laughing. “You know I love making people feel awkward.”

“I never would have guessed,” he says as he holds out his hands so I slide my fingers between them.

“You have one minute. Say anything that comes to mind, and make sure you switch back and forth. But we’re not trying to fix the issue, just tell your partner your fears. Now begin.”

I squeeze Lane’s hands. “I’ll start. I fear that everyone thinks I’m the insane one with a knack for adventure when it’s actually you who drags me into every single thing,” I say.

Lane nods. “I’m afraid of your cooking and fear that one day it’ll kill me.”

Savage! “Um, excuse me?”

“She said we aren’t fixing it,” he says with a wicked grin.

“Fine, I fear how old you are and that you’ll be a crippled old man while I’m still in my prime.”

He bites his lip to keep from laughing. “I fear that if you get any shorter, I’ll crush you when we have sex.”

“I fear that you’re an adrenaline junkie who only gets hard when faced with danger.”

The instructor claps. “Excellent, excellent! Now I want you and your partner to talk about how you can help them with their fears.”

“I’ll begin then,” Lane says. “Well... I’m going to let you get a pet during every adventure so you see how fun it is. It’s like positive reinforcement.”

“Ooh, I like this. Alright... I’m going to stop cooking and move your mom into our house so she can cook.”

“Okay... I’m not sure I want to live with my mom, but I like the idea. I’m going to... make you older by stressing you out with my adventures so we’re both old together.”

“Good one, good one. I’m going to wear platform shoes so I’m taller.”

“Perfect. I’m going to make sure I get hard during other times as well so it’s not just in the face of danger.”

“Oh my god, we’re amazing, you know that, right?” I ask.

“Like you said, best couple here.”

“My other idea had been to get one of those backpacks with the leash on it that you see parents put on their kids so they don’t run off. That way every time you’re running toward adventure, I can just tie you up somewhere. You’d never be able to figure out how to get free.”

“I’ve definitely forgotten how to undo a buckle. How are we just so much smarter than everyone else?” Lane asks, which makes me laugh.

“I don’t know. It’s sad really.”

“Excellent!” Maddie says. “Everyone up to your feet!”

We get up.

“Now we’re going to do some trust-falls. You’re going to stand behind your partner and when they fall back, you’re going to catch them. The person falling has to trust that you’ll be there for them. If you don’t feel comfortable, we can have a spotter!”

“Oh man, I’m going to catch you so hard,” I growl.

“He’s going to squish you,” Jenny says.

“Just because your man is weak doesn’t mean I won’t catch Lane,” I say. “If my arms fail me, my penis will keep him up. It’s like a kickstand.”

“Hear that, Lane? Felix is going to catch you with his penis,” Jenny says.

“Oh, I heard.”

I snicker as I take Copper from Lane and have him sit off to the side. “I’m catching Lane first,” I say as I step behind him.

“Everyone ready?” the instructor asks. “Now trust your partner... and fall.”

Lane is probably the only person who immediately just falls back. I mean... after the countless things I’ve run him into including, counters, walls, glass, it’s endless, but he just falls right into my arms.

He’s a little heavier than I was anticipating *but* my pure overwhelming love keeps me from dropping him.

“Oh my god, you love me,” I whisper as I squeeze him.

“What? Were you planning on me not falling?” he asks.

“Well, I guess I kind of thought I burned the bridge of trust a long time ago,” I say as I push him back up.

Lane snorts. “Felix do you even realize how many times a day I trust you? From the moment I wake up to the moment I go to bed, I trust you for almost everything. Yeah, sometimes you forget to pay attention and run me into things, but if you take into account many times you help me, they far outweigh it.”

“You’re going to make me cry, and I don’t want to cry like a wuss in front of everyone,” I say.

“Don’t cry. We can’t beat everyone if you’re letting tears obstruct your view.”

“You’re right! Now you have to catch me.”

“Tell me when you’re falling, and I’ll catch you.”

“Switch positions!” Maddie says.

“Ready, Lane?” I ask.

“Sure.”

“Catch me like your virgin bride.”

“Um... okay?”

“Countdown from three. Three... two... one!”

I fall back and Lane instantly snatches me up. I quickly grab onto his arm so I can feel the bulge of his muscle and act like my entire body is a deadweight.

Robbie still hasn’t taken the plunge. “I’m scared of you,” Robbie says to Jenny.

“You’re going to be really scared if you don’t fall into my arms,” Jenny threatens.

“We’re so much better than them,” I inform Lane

“We are,” Lane says as he squeezes me.

Once the inferior couples finish up, the instructor has us gather before a group of objects.

“We’re going to have one more trust activity. For this one, one partner will be blindfolded and the other will guide them through my mini obstacle course!” she says like she’s delighted. Or maybe they’re paying her well. “You will need to guide them over to the raised

pole,” she explains, “through the chair maze, under the little arch here, and out the other side. Do I have any volunteers to go through first?”

I instantly raise my hand.

She glances between me and Lane, hesitates, then smiles. “O-Okay.”

“I want to be the one blindfolded,” I adamantly say.

Lane snorts, Robbie lets out a laugh, and the woman just stares at us.

“Yes, but... you’ll need someone to direct you.”

“Yeah... are you saying Lane can’t?” I ask, like I’m confused. “Oh... babe, I guess we’re not allowed to join... we’ll just... wait over here while the rest of you play. Come on, babe.”

“You are awful,” Lane whispers.

I try my hardest not to grin. “I know.”

“No! Please! Go ahead! If that’s what you want to do!” the instructor says.

Well... shit.

“What are you doing to do now, Felix?” Lane asks with a grin.

“We’ll... show her our... connection of course.

“While that sounds lovely... I think we might fail at this.”

“Of course not. Our telepathy will save us.”

“I fear I didn’t get the memo about being telepathic, but I’ll try my best.”

“What do we win if we’re the best couple?” I ask Maddie as I walk up to her.

“It’s... not a competition.”

“Oh, well that sucks. We don’t get a cake or anything.”

“No... are you sure you want blindfolded?”

“Well, you said one of us had to be blindfolded and it’d be a bit overkill to blindfold the blind guy,” I say as I take the blindfold from her and put it on, not quite sure what my plan is. While Lane is a magnificent beast, I’m not sure how good his directions are. “Lane, give me commands in German like I’m Copper,” I decide.

Copper thumps his tail and while everyone is probably focused on the blind guy or Copper, I discreetly push my blindfold up enough to see down. Then Lane starts giving me random German words because he does whatever I say. And I move through that course like a fucking phoenix risen from the flames. My back is to everyone, so no one seems to notice the adjustment to the blindfold as I step over, through, and under every obstacle with flying colors.

When I get to the end and pull the blindfold free, I look to my confused audience. “I wish all of you could reach the level of connection Lane and I have. And when you reach that part, maybe you guys too could travel through life not needing to see anything other than the love you hold for each other.”

I get a standing ovation for that one, which might be a bit much since I cheated horribly, but it’s still clear that Lane and I are the best couple here. When she has us reverse roles and Lane go through it, I guide him so damn well that he doesn’t even stumble.

“Do you even feel remotely bad that none of the other couples will reach our level of amazingness?” I ask Lane as we head outside to give Copper a bathroom break.

“I suppose there’s slight pity. So how’d you run the obstacle course?”

“Oh, I totally pushed my blindfold up so I could see where I was going. You giving me the command to lay down in German really wasn’t helping much.”

He chuckles. “I threw a few ‘comes’ in there too.”

“Yeah, they probably wouldn’t have appreciated me coming in the middle of their obstacle course.”

He snorts. “No, I don’t think they would have.”

We walk out to the side yard where we let Copper loose and Lane takes my hand as we walk toward the small pond with a fountain in the middle.

“This has been really fun,” I say as I squeeze his hand. “I didn’t realize how much fun it would be, you know?”

He smiles at me. “I agree. I had a lot of fun with you trying to prove we’re the best couple known to mankind. You make me feel so free when I’m not shackled down by the loss of my eyesight.”

“People just need to realize that you’re not breakable or different. I know you hate it when people try to interact with you like you’re glass. That’s why I’m here to make everyone uncomfortable with how I treat you.”

He chuckles. “Even me.”

“Even you! God, I’m so good.”

He pulls me in and kisses the top of my head. “You are.”

“How good am I?”

“Like an ultra-triple chocolate brownie supreme good.”

“Oh god,” I moan. “I didn’t know I was *that* good.”

“You’re that good and better.”

“Aw. I love you too!” I say as we near the pond. “They have this pretty pond and the water is so blue. It’s gorgeous.”

“I can hear the fountain.”

“I want a pond so I can get some fish.”

“We don’t need fish.”

“Maybe a swan.”

“Swans are expensive.”

“Not if you steal them.”

“Jail time is expensive.”

“Nah. You’ll bail me out. I trust you with my life. I trust to you to protect me.”

“Me too.”

That’s when I see a duck swim by with three tiny ducklings and my heart is snatched away.

“Oh my god, I want one!” I say just as I’m jerked savagely forward. Lane’s hand leaves mine as I hear a huge splash of water and look over at Lane sinking into the pond.

Oh no... oh holy fuck, no.

What have I done?

Lane slowly sits up from where he’d fallen *into* the pond because I might have gotten distracted by the ducklings and forgot to tell him to stop walking.

“Babe... I can explain.”

“Our trust has been shattered.”

“No! There were *ducklings*.”

He’s sitting in the pond, water running off his hair and clothes. “Our trust is now nonexistent.”

“But, *Lane*. There were ducklings, and we’re the best couple ever, remember?”

“Was that before or after you let me *fall into a pond*?”

“But the ducklings...?”

He sighs as he stands up and steps out of the water. “Come here.”

“No... I don't want to.”

“Come here, Felix.”

“I really don't want to,” I say as I try to back away.

“Felix, there's only *one* way to fix this.”

“Oh... but there's not.”

He rushes for me and I try to scramble backwards, but I hadn't notice Copper sniffing behind me. I stumble and Lane catches me, wrapping me up in his wet and stinking arms as he starts dragging me back toward the pond.

“No, Lane! Please!”

“I just want you to get an up-close look at the ducklings.”

“You scared them away when you fell into the pond!”

“Oh, I'm sure you can find them again.”

“No! I can't! Please! We're trust buddies, remember? I love you!”

He sighs and stops about a foot from the pond. “What now?”

“We need to sneak you back inside to change clothes so no one knows that this happened.”

He shakes his head. “I'd like to forget it happened as well.”

I tuck my head against his chest and start laughing. “If you'd have seen your face as you sat in that water. I'm dying.”

He lifts me up.

“No! Please! I'm sorry!” I cry as I cling onto him.

“Fine,” he says as he kisses the side of my forehead with his wet pond lips. “Let's go inside.”

“Yes! I like that! I like it back when we could tell everyone how awesome we are.”

“Me too,” he says. “I smelled less fishy at that point.”

“I love you.”

“Stop buttering me up.”

“You're the sun and moon.”

“Shush.”

“And I love it when your shirt is wet and I can see your nipples through it.”

“Let's go.”

I smile as I lead him back toward the house. Even with the dip in the pond, today has been a pretty damn good day.