

Chapter 28

Sheridan Pickett grows increasingly worried when Lance Ramsey, her coworker and secret romantic interest, fails to arrive at Silver Creek Ranch after a weekend at his remote cabin. With no cell service in the area, she imagines dire scenarios—mechanical failures, avalanches, or illness—while searching for his truck and snowmobile trailer. Her anxiety is compounded by her desire to share news of her recent involvement in a high-profile raid, which had garnered media attention. Despite her concern, she hesitates to report Lance's absence to their manager, Mark Gordon, fearing repercussions for him.

Sheridan's unease deepens as she reflects on her feelings for Lance, admitting how much she misses his presence on the lonely ranch. She considers borrowing a snowmobile to search for him herself, since her father and brother are unavailable. When she finally informs Gordon, he agrees to her plan, providing a satellite phone and subtly acknowledging their relationship. Sheridan is relieved he doesn't lecture her about workplace fraternization, though she remains focused on finding Lance before it's too late.

As Sheridan prepares for her search, she encounters the Youngberg farriers, Ben and Brady, who mock her with nicknames like "Little Miss" and taunt her about the raid photo. Their jeering escalates when they reference Lance as "Lance Romance" and imply she relies on her father and Lance for protection. Ignoring their provocations, Sheridan retreats to the storage garage to gather supplies and a snowmobile, determined to avoid further confrontation.

Despite her efforts to leave discreetly, the Youngbergs block her path, standing outside the garage door as it opens. Their presence threatens to delay her mission, adding tension to her already urgent task. Sheridan's resolve to find Lance remains unwavering, but the encounter with the farriers underscores the challenges she

faces—both in her search and in navigating the complexities of her relationships at the ranch.

