

CH 16

Nick POV

Jeremy, suddenly screaming down the mink-link at him, shot him to his feet, the book dropping from his hands 'Alpha' pure urgency in his voice.

'What?' he shot back, keeping it short.

'Incoming Alpha Wolf, chasing after your Mate; eastern border now.'

Nick was gone like a shot, out of the library, down the hall to the stairs, vaulted off of the landing and hit the ground oor with one hell of a thud, then shot for the front door. He noted on his way across the packhouse that he wasn't the only one on the move, the whole Alpha Unit was running for the front door. Nick got there rst; he was faster.

Rip surged forward and shifted him the moment they were out the door, shredding through his favourite suit in the process. Bolting at top speed for the border, where his Mate was in trouble. Being hunted by another Alpha Male. 'Rip coming full speed.' he told Jeremy 'how many?'

'Just one, she taunted him into it, boss.'

'What the...keep her safe.' he was furious with her now. What the hell was she doing, taunting an Alpha Wolf, making it go after her, was she so crazy? So damned fearless? She'd had no trouble shooting an arrow at him, or throwing knives at him, ripping into his car. His mate was bloody insane, it seemed, and clearly not afraid, to go up against an Alpha Wolf.

He saw the alpha wolf, a hundred or so meters from the border, saw Ky'ra howl, and it was massive. He'd not heard a female wolf howl like that before. Then she was growling and snarling, pure aggression ooding out of her. He was utterly shocked by her. A full-blown challenge from his mate, to the Alpha before her, even he and Rip both understood that. An Alpha Duel challenge only she wasn't an Alpha.

The minute the other wolf accepted the challenge, Rip was lled with rage and ready to kill him. Ky'ra was off a second later to go after him herself, 'bring her down.' Nick yelled at Rip, she was going to get herself killed, and he hadn't even gotten to claim her yet. Rip was fast and strong, he slammed his body into hers from the side, and she fell, rolled over, had not been expecting any interference from anyone, it seemed.

Rip stopped in front of her, blocking her from view, and sent out a massive warning growl towards the other Alpha Wolf. His ears were at against his head, his tail was dropped low, his hackles were all up, his whole body was lled with tension. Ready to sprint off and take down the other Alpha, if he didn't heed his warning, to stay back.

Then Alpha Corey was right next to him, his wolf also sent out a massive growl of a warning to the other Alpha. One Alpha wolf verses two Alpha wolves was the warning. The wolf stopped but didn't back away.

Ky'ra, however, was apparently unhappy about the interference, and was running around, back and forth, trying to get past him and her Alpha. She clearly wanted a piece of this Alpha Wolf for herself, so much aggression was pouring off of his mate, it was undeniable that she wanted to ght him. He couldn't reach her, they were not marked or mated, and she wasn't a member of his pack yet.

'Jeremy, what the hell?'

'I don't know boss. Once she got a look at his human, she was all anger and aggression, taunting him almost instantly. Maybe she knows him.'

'Wrangle her, for Goddess's sake.'

Rip and he were watching the other Alpha Wolf, who was now watching his mate, going completely crazy with rage, it seemed, with great interest. Though it was no longer trying to come for her, to many wolves around now, more had arrived, to many for one lone Alpha Wolf.

They were having a hell of a time trying to corner his furious mate, and it took the entire Alpha Unit, plus Jeremy and several others who he didn't know. She wasn't trying to attack any of them; just push past them.

The minute Ky'ra was forced back to pack territory and herded away, the other Alpha Wolf turned and ran off back the way it had come. Rip was still snarling, but turned and stalked his Mate. She was actually surrounded by eight wolves, he noted. Three were the Alpha Unit, the other 5 he didn't recognize.

'Jeremy, go ahead and get me pants.'

'Yes boss.' and his wolf Cal was off running ahead to do exactly that. He knew when and where to be a Beta.

Rip shifted them back to human form the minute Jeremy appeared with clothing, jeans and tee-shirt, he dressed and continued to stalk after his Mate. He could see the Luna and Gamma's mate both standing in front of the packhouse. Both looked at Ky'ra with great concern. The Luna was holding a dress in her hand, for when Lucinda shifted he guessed.

He was not at all happy about her having to shift in front of all of those wolves. No one should see his mate naked but him. The minute he heard the rst c***k of her shift, he stepped forward to shade her body from prying eyes, and the minute that dress was on her. He clamped a hand around her arm and dragged her into the packhouse.

To the Alpha's oce, he didn't much care, that this wasn't his packhouse or his oce right now. The Alpha's oce was where their showdown was going to happen.

He was surprised that she had enough strength, to yank her arm from his grip, but he thought it was more to do with the way she had done it, twisted and pulled so hard and fast towards his thumb that it was forced to snap back. He lost his grip on her. She was indeed well-trained.

He watched as she stalked over and sat in front of her Alpha's desk, 'done this before' he thought to himself. He stood and watched the yelling match, saw her wolf size-up, her own Alpha. Shocking him completely, but she did back down a minute later when his Alpha aura was forced over her. Her blatant disregard for him being in the room, and her not wanting him there at all, was ticking him off as well.

Getting right in her face, he made it very clear to her, she would be answering Alpha Corey's questions, or he would be the one tearing strips off of her. Rip was pissed off at his Mate for putting herself in danger, but he had backed off now, and was actually snarling at Nick for threatening her.

Staring right into her eyes, he was just mere inches away, they were a beautiful light honey-brown colour, he could see some green in them. Ky'ra was staring back at him as well, but was not on the surface. He liked her eyes, surrounded by those thick black lashes, ones that would rival his own. He was going to enjoy looking at them, when they weren't so full of deance and anger. He wondered what they would look like, lled with desire and lust for him.

His instincts shifted his thoughts, to the current situation and as he watched her, and realized she was getting real angry at him, he could tell just from the way she was looking at him, she was thinking about lashing out at him, but was in two minds at the same time.

"Do you really want to nd out, Lucinda?...you might not like the answer." he grated, it seemed to work, even though he was fully pissed off at her stupid behaviour, out there today, and it was clear from all the snarling his wolf was aiming at him. Rip was not going to let him hurt her 'leave her.' He was practically roaring inside of Nick's mind.

When Alpha Corey asked him to give them a minute, to placate his beast Rip, he did, though not without telling her it was not over, he was going to get answers to her reckless behaviour.

He didn't go far, prowled around the foyer of the packhouse, where there was the Alpha unit, and her retrieval team. Ah, the other ve wolves he thought. The Luna and the Gamma's mate, as well as a tired-looking Jeremy. Poor bastard, had barely any sleep 'Jeremy, go get some sleep.' he told him.

Jeremy just looked at him for a moment, his Beta instincts were still up, and he just shook his head 'I'll wait the outcome, boss.'

It completely took him for six, when his Mate came out of the Alpha's oce, tears streaming from her beautiful honey-brown eyes, and running down her lovely face. Rip whined at his Mate's distress and Nick moved towards her on pure instinct. As mad as he was, he was concerned by her state.

He felt the urge to comfort her, wanted to pull her into his arms and tell her it would be alright. He just about had her, when she moved so quickly he couldn't believe it, ducked under his outstretched hands and turned away from him. Then ran away from him, literally ran.

He tracked her outside, no one stopped him, not the Alpha unit, not her retrieval team, not the Luna or the Gamma's mate even, and he knew, he was currently on bad terms with that woman. He stopped on the front step, and could see she was headed; for her house. Nick watched her go inside and slam the door shut. His Alpha hearing even picked up, her locking the door.

Rip was very unhappy. 'Our mate is distressed.'

'I can see that.' Nick acknowledged.

'Don't you dare hurt our mate.' Rip snarled at him all of a sudden, then stalked off to the back of his mind. Nick frowned, he hadn't wanted to hurt her. It was weird though, how he'd gone from really furiously mad at her, and wanting to lock her up, til he got his answers. To, in just one second of seeing her so upset, tears spilling down her face too, wanting to wrap her tiny body in his big arms and comfort her, his anger was gone right this minute.

He had not liked seeing those tears, how upset she was, it didn't sit well with him at all. Rip disliked it even more. He didn't really understand his sudden change of mind, or mood towards her. His feelings were confusing him, to say the least. He stood there looking at her house for a long time, trying to decide what to do about it, about her to be honest 'I want my mate,' Rip snarled at him.

'I'm not going to reject her Rip, calm down.' He muttered to his wolf and he wasn't, he did want her for himself.

The Mate Bond he'd read about today was already drawing him to her, he had known it last night. He was going to claim that tiny she-wolf for himself. He just didn't realize at the time, that his bond to her could be so strong. That he would want no other, his father and brother's bonds had never been like that.

He'd heard Denny talk about it and chide him, "You just wait and see when you nd your mate."

Nick did know deep down, wolves did like to mate for life, he'd just never seen it. In any of the higher ranked members of the pack growing up, they marked, mated and rejected at will, for the next thing that they liked that came along. He'd just presumed it didn't apply to Alpha's. Until he'd read the book today.

He hadn't known who she was at the time, and had been more than happy to know his Mate, was sexy as hell, curves in all the places he liked, and a strong warrior, she was perfect for him, because their pup would be good and strong. Now that he also knew, she was the retrieval specialist girl, it was a bit more dicult.

He had insulted her on more than one occasion; called her a mutt, and it was clear she was pissed off about it. Likely her wolf Ky'ra was too, and that was why they got this morning's response. Just now in the Alpha's oce, she had reminded him about calling her a mutt. He, being her mate, was not out weighing her anger over the insult, he could foresee more diculties ahead.

She challenged him right away, about disrespect the minute he'd brought it up, 'if you can dish it out, you should be able to take it.' a smile touched his lips. His men that day had called her a feisty one. They had not been wrong.

Nick headed back inside. "Jeremy, what actually happened out there today?" He knew his Beta was tired, he could actually see it, but he wasn't going anywhere. Nick could see that too.

"I don't really know boss. She wandered about, I think an abandoned pack territory. It didn't feel like rogue territory to me...Then that Alpha Wolf appeared, Cal was instantly up and nudging her to leave. It growled at us both, Cal nipped her to get her moving. She went. It chased, though I think only to get us off the territory.

"When it stopped chasing she stopped running... The Alpha shifted and all I could see was Ky'ra really watching him, like she was trying to see who he was maybe, then all of a sudden she was taunting him, and challenging him. I think brought him back here on purpose."

"Really wanted a piece of him." Nick mused a loud "Why is the question?"

He sent Jeremy off to get some rest. He actually went this time with no argument, just wanted to report to Nick, he guessed. A good Beta he was. But he still had no answers about what and why his Mate had wanted a piece of that Alpha wolf.

He found himself, under the watchful eye of Luna Lindy, he was going to have to apologize to her, at some point. He didn't like it, but knew he was going to have to do it. Actually, he was a little surprised, she hadn't had him removed from her pack already. Goddess, that was a hard one to get his head around. Her pack, as much as it was the Alpha's.