

CH 2

Nick POV

He halted his team as they made their way down into the valley. He had not scented anything other than the rogues and their captives, four of whom were from his pack. But his wolfen sight had just picked up movement past the treeline, on the other side of the narrow valley before them; it looked like a special unit. They were all moving in-sync with each other, and he could clearly see they had a purpose; ve to twelve, not good odds though.

The explosion of wood right next to his face startled the life out of him, his eyes moved towards it, a long black arrow was embedded into the tree trunk right next to his face, only two inches away.

'Goddess Nick,' his Beta Jeremy gasped down the open mind-link, 'nearly lost your head'

Nick's eyes moved along the arrow to sight where it had come from, and there across the valley stood a small thin man holding a large compound bow. He was looking right back at him 'go get him'. He sent down the mind-link to his two warriors.

He grabbed the knife from his leg holster and ung it at that small bastard with all his Alpha power, aiming to put it right through that man's eye. Nick was more than a little shocked to see that man just lean back, and watch it sail passed him. His reexes were indeed fast, then he watched as he took it from the tree. Nick couldn't help but smile at his handiwork.

Nick saw as the man tested the weight of his blade, and then it was ung back at him. Nick knew it was going to come up short, it was too low in the air already to hit him, this man needed more training...then the blade was embedded into the tip of his shoe, right between his big toe and the next one.

A snarl came from Rip his wolf, angered by the second attack on him and his human counterpart, whoever this man was, was going to pay 'Bring that mutt to me alive.' He shot down the mind-link to his warriors, knew those two that were going to round him up.

He watched on as that man turned while notching an arrow, and shot one of his warriors.

He knew it hit him due to the cry of pain that echoed in the valley, and he was severed from the mind-link. He was using silver, it seemed. Then he was aiming at his other warrior, though he hadn't let the arrow y yet, then turned and looked right at him. 'Oh I understand you mutt, but you're mine now.' He was going to have a piece of that man. When his man didn't back off, the arrow was released, and he watched as his man was pinned to the tree behind him with an arrow through the hand.

Then another was aimed right at him, his intent was clear, but ghting suddenly broke out in the valley. "Go." he snapped to his unit, that bastard up on the hill would have to wait. He pulled the knife from his shoe, sheathed it and ran down into the rogue camp in the valley.

Nick and his unit started ghting against the rogues, just like the others he'd seen coming down the valley were doing.

He took down 3 rogues on his own in short order, and he saw three dead with arrows in each of them, dead center to their heart. that man in the woods wasn't messing about any more than the team he'd come with was, or he and his men were.

He and his men stood in front of the other wolves. After the battle was one, there were ve of them all dressed in black. He snarled at them, and demanded to know what pack they were from. He was informed by a man named Thomas, their group's leader. Which was clear just by the size of him. He was bigger and scented of Beta blood, he stated, the Half Moon Pack.

Then Thomas declared themselves as that pack's retrieval team, and that they were here to rescue three wolves from their pack. The girls were now being released. His kidnapped females came over and bowed to him and thanked him for coming to get them 'of course girls, go with Kevin and Braidy, your safe now.' and motioned for them to head back the way they had come.

Then he turned back to Thomas "That mutt of yours up on the hill...nearly took my head off." he snapped angrily.

"That is their job, as our back-up. To monitor and deter, don't take it personally. You're still alive, be thankful for that, our back-up is not known for their mercy," his smile said it all, he was proud of his mutt, and Nick would normally have been dead.

"If you'd been in wolf form, it would have been a kill shot."

"Perhaps your mutt should know who the enemy is. Ask questions rst. Shoot later."

"In our line of work, that's never going to happen." Thomas replied calmly, though he seemed quite amused at how ticked off Nick was. He was not even bothered that he was being stared down by a massive Alpha and, at 6 foot 10 inches, Nick knew he was imposing.

"Why isn't your Alpha here to do this?" he was curious about that. Retrieving stolen pack members was, as far as he was concerned, an Alpha and his units job.

"We are a specialist retrieval team, this is our job, all day, every day," Thomas stated simply.

"There shouldn't be much call for that kind of unit," he frowned. "Is your pack under threat of she-wolf kidnappings often?"

"Not at all, but it does happen. We are also sent out to help other packs who are allied to us. Your pack would be?"

"Blue Moon Rising Pack."

Thomas gave a low whistle, he clearly had heard of him and his pack, then he nodded "Far from home, I see."

"Not as the crow y's," Nick replied. "I suggest you keep your mutt on a leash."

Then he strode off back up the hill. He would leave the mutt for now. He didn't need any more enemy packs. He made a point of stopping, to get that arrow that had nearly taken his eye out. It was long and black with black feather ends, and the tip was silver as he'd suspected, it was quite large and had 3 barbs.

He realized that once it went in it wasn't coming out in a hurry, it would require a pack doctor to remove it. Keeping a wolf at bay was its desired effect. Nick doubted very much that the bloody mutt had been trying to take his eye out, it had been a warning shot only, he now understood. Had seen the deadly accuracy of his kills, and that knife throwing, it was just a game of I'm better than you.

He glanced around the woods and couldn't spot the stupid mutt, but took great pleasure in snapping that arrow over his knee and tossing it on the ground. 'Come and get it mutt.' he thought to himself.

As they headed back, his two warriors fell into step with them. " Sorry boss, she's a ery one."

"She?" he frowned

"Yeah, the mutt is a girl."

Now that was interesting, a girl as a back-up. He wouldn't put a she-wolf at risk by taking them to a rogue encampment where they took she-wolves and sold them on the black market. What a stupid idea. Another reason why he and his Alpha Unit dealt with this sort of thing personally. The stronger the unit, the better the odds of retrieval.

Not that this was something he had to deal with often. At Blue Moon Rising Pack everybody trained, no matter their rank, no one argued with him. Not after his Alpha Duel, when he and Rip had displayed just how powerful they truly were.

He'd had a few wolves defect to other packs after the Alpha Duel, but they were of no great loss to him. They had all been loyal to the previous Alpha, and he had been glad to see them go, tail between their legs, fearing for their very lives.

"Good-sized warrior? Looked small from where I was."

"No your right boss, tiny thing, you could probably bench press her one armed, even if she was soaking wet." Phillip informed him with a wiry smile on his face. He could tell Phillip was impressed with her.

"Maybe 5 foot 8, lucky if she weighs 60kg, boss," his other warrior, Rick, informed him.

"What's the mutt look like?" he asked, curious even more, now that he knew it was a girl who'd nearly taken his head off, and seemed only too happy to play, who could throw better. He doubted now the knife had been miss thrown at all, exactly where she wanted it to go he was guessing. No wonder she'd tested the weight of it.

"Don't know boss, she was all covered up, knives all over her too, at least a dozen and that bow?" Phillip gave a low whistle, "Nice indeed. Her quiver held at least two dozen arrows, all black. Damned fast and good instincts."

"Hmm."

"No pack seal on the outt though."

Nick noticed his top warrior, Phillip, was rubbing his hand, "How bad is that wound?"

"It itches, but Hinkley is on it, not impressed about the silver tip on the damned thing, but it went right threw. I snapped it and removed it to save trying to drag it back through. Hinkley was not gonna let me anyhow. Gonna scar though."

Nick turned to Rick, "How are you doing?"

"It's still in there, not a lethal shot. I don't think she was trying to kill me, just a warning. Pack doc will have to remove it. So Mac is out of action at this point. He'll be really cranky when he's back boss. Hurts like a b***h though."

"I'll patch it at the cars. You want a tranquilizer to help with the pain."

"No, Its ne."

"They're from the Half Moon Pack, just so you know. If you come across them later on and want a word with their mutt," he replied, knowing payback would be on Mac's list for being put out of action and scarring his human.

"Oh hey, I know a girl who moved there, years ago, before you took over, found her mate at a mating ball there."

"Goddess, do they still do that?"

"Most packs do, Nick!" Jeremy laughed at him. "It's the quickest way for multiple packs to nd their pack member's mates."

"It's just a stupid excuse for a f**k-fest in my opinion." Nick shook his head.

His whole unit laughed at him, they all knew he didn't have time to hunt out a mate that might never exist. So he never held mating balls and did not attend them either. He had better things to do, like keeping his pack safe, making sure it was strong enough to go in and over take the small packs to increase his pack territory and bring more strength to his pack.

If he came across his mate, yes, he would claim her, mark and mate her and have her produce and heir. But he was in no rush and was not about to actively seek out some she-wolf, who was going to sit around all day and do nothing, just need his protection because they couldn't look after themselves. He'd seen the last lot of Alpha's mates to his pack, a useless bunch of women, who spent their days ordering omegas to do things for them, and laying around doing nothing.

Nick had already made the decision, that he would choose a strong female warrior from his pack when he was about 35 or so, and produce an heir with them. Not a Luna, just an agreed upon mating to produce him an Heir for the pack. A contracted child, he liked to think of it.

One was all he needed, any more than that, and there was a high possibility of ghting for the right to be pack Alpha, and that could inturn completely ruin the pack. He should know he had older half bothers, all dead now.

Nick didn't particularly care whether the child was male or female. As long as it was his, had his blood owing through their veins, he knew they would be strong. He also intended to put them into training the minute the child turned ve. He would train his child himself, make sure it could ght and lead properly.