

CH 9

Nick POV

He'd been out stretching his legs with his Beta when they'd walked around the corner of the packhouse, and Rip had pushed his way to the surface. Turned Nick's whole body and attention to the pack's training grounds, and there she was all kitted-out again. He still couldn't see what she looked like, and to his surprise, she had two small proteges with her. 'Ah, that is why they are so close to her.' he thought to himself; she's their trainer.

Jeremy leaned on the wall next to him. "Is it just me, or are all the she-wolves around here, super tiny and freaking cute?"

"It's just your raging hormones." Nick shot back, but when he thought about it, the Luna was tiny. As was the Gamma's Mate. He knew the "mutt" was tiny, and this morning even Ky'ra's human counterpart had been tiny as well. Maybe his Beta was right.

'You should probably stop calling her that.' Jeremy shot down the mind-link, as they watched the girl turn and aim an arrow right at him, then dared him to call her a mutt again.

Nick hadn't even realized he'd actually said it out loud, but clearly he had. He watched as both her charges followed as she did. Very well-trained, he doubted they had the power to hit him from there. But he knew she did, and he'd seen her pull that arrow back to the full power of her compound bow. It would make it. No doubt about it, and she knew it too.

Jeremy had halted his natural instinct to accept the challenge. He watched as she turned her bow and aimed down the training ground at the target, never took her eyes off of him and let her arrow y. It hit the target at the other end, damned near dead center too, she was showing him just how well-trained she was.

'Don't think you want to mess with this one boss.' Jeremy sent down the mind-link, he watched her for another minute then walked away. He'd already scared the twins once. He didn't think he'd be able to get away with it a second time, and that she-wolf would likely turn on him, she didn't seem to care that he was an Alpha.

He was going to have to get that girl alone before he left, but she seemed only to appear with the two children. So it probably wasn't going to be easy. Would likely have to actually request an audience with her through Alpha Corey, before he left tomorrow morning. He could just bet the whole Alpha unit would be there, considering they had bets on her trying to take a piece of him.

It appeared that they might just be right. She had no fear of him from what he could see. But with that weapon in her hand, and covered in knives, he wasn't surprised at all. She probably also knew that she was safe with the girls around her. She could wait for now.

Nick was not looking forward to tonight, and the Goddess had better not have plans for him. He had a bigger sh to fry and didn't need the distraction of nding a mate in the middle of it. But Rip had been acting weird all day.

Eyed off that Ky'ra wolf, and her human, had growled at his Beta for the comments about her body. Then he'd surged forward and stared at that Lucinda she-wolf as well. Both times, with both women, his ears had been up, and he'd tried to smell them. Lucinda had never been close enough for them to catch her scent. Nick had no idea what was up with Rip. But he was prowling around inside Nick's mind, his tail icking back and forth, he was agitated. That much was certain.

'Rip, what is it?' he asked for the umpteenth time today.

'Nothing.' he'd snarled back this time.

'Cranky today, I see.'

'To many she-wolves.' was all he returned. Whatever he was trying to smell was obviously being blocked by all the un-mated she-wolves, and the scent of their arousal around him.

'How about we get out of this pack and clear your head?'

'Go.' Rip agreed.

Nick informed Jeremy he was going for a drive, to get away from all the smells of the mating ball.

'Right boss. I'll keep an eye on our pack.'

Nick did not want to be here when the moon set, and it seemed neither did Rip. He was headed towards his car, coming down the front of the pack-house steps when Rip froze his body and surged forward. The wind was blowing towards them and he'd spotted Ky'ra leaving her house. 'Mine.' Rip suddenly growled inside Nicks mind.

'What?'

'Mine.'

Nick took a deep breath in himself, and Goddess he could smell her scent, brought to him in the wind that was blowing. Honey... Ginger and another breath in... Lavander. Goddess, she was his mate. The moon wasn't even set yet, but they both knew it. They watched the wolf disappear into the forest heading east, to patrol, probably. She didn't know it though.

No wonder Rip had been off all day, he'd been trying to scent out his mate all day, and even this morning, but hadn't been able too.

'Jeremy get out to the front of the packhouse now.' he practically yelled the last word down the mind-link.

Jeremy appeared in record time, clearly hearing the urgency in his Alpha's tone, "What's wrong Nick?"

"I just found my Mate."

"What really?" he was already looking around him searching for the she-wolf in question. "Where? Did she run off already? Goddess Nick, did you scare her off?" he asked, but only half jokingly.

"The moon's not set yet. Go protect her. It's that grey wolf from this morning, Ky'ra."

Jeremy laughed now, "No wonder Rip growled at me."

Nick pointed in the direction Ky'ra had headed off in, "Eastern patrol I'm guessing."

"Alright, you're not going to go?"

"No, I'll deal with it tomorrow."

"You sure boss? If she doesn't scent you, you might miss your chance."

"It'll be ne, I know now. That is all that matters."

"Okay...if you say so, boss." Jeremy shook his head, but was already stripping his clothes off, he copped a wolf whistle from some she-wolves who were headed this way. He turned and grinned at them, took a moment to show off all his muscles, bloody horny bastard. Then shifted right in front of them and headed off into the woods.

Nick picked up his Beta's clothing, and he headed for his car, still wanting to get away from the scent around him. They couldn't do anything about their Mate until after the moon set anyway, and that was an hour away. He pulled out his phone as he walked over and checked the luna phase, smiled to himself. He had all night and into mid-morning to sort it out, so it seemed. The moon phase wouldn't actually change til nearly 10am, good.

As he walked around his car, his eyes fell on claw marks that were scratched all over the drivers door and all the way down and along it to the tailgate. The driver's side door handle was crushed as well. "What the..." Anger boiled inside of him, this was just what he needed. He tested the handle. The door did not open. He opened the back door and tossed Jeremy's clothes in and slammed the door shut.

Snapped half a dozen photos of the damage, and headed back inside the packhouse in search of Alpha Corey. At least walking through all these wolves, he didn't have to worry about a Mate nding him; he had one now. He was going to demand Alpha Corey nd the culprit, and make them present themselves before him. They would know fear soon.

Alpha Corey was easily found, sitting at a table waiting for the moon to set. Watching over the mating ball with his Luna next to him, and his Alpha Unit right there. "Alpha Corey, I need a word please?" his tone was full of annoyance, he had curbed his anger, didn't need the pack Alpha thinking he was spoiling for a ght.

"What can I do for you, son?" he asked, smiling up at him.

Nick was irked by the word son, the man, maybe his senior, but Nick was not his son. He held out his phone. "That is my car. I just found it like that."

Alpha Corey's smile turned to a deep frown. "I'm sorry," he nodded and handed it back. "Let me go look, see what I can determine."

"Oh, I can think of one person in this pack that might do it, that mutt of yours."

Alpha Corey raised an eyebrow at Nick. "Now, why would you think young Lucinda would do that? You haven't even seen her yet, have you?"

"Actually," Nick stated, as they headed through the packhouse "I saw her this afternoon, she turned her bow on me. Again." he grated out the last word.

Alpha Corey sighed and shook his head, "did you disrespectfully call her a Mutt, again?"

Nick frowned and when he didn't answer, Alpha Corey raised an eyebrow at him. They stopped outside, and he looked at the car, "Did you Alpha Nicholas?" he asked, repeating the unanswered question.

"Yes, but it was an accident. I meant to say it internally," he shrugged.

"Hmm, it does seem your car is damaged."

"No shit." Nick snapped, angry at his seemingly uncaring demeanour.

"Manners boy. I am older than you, and haven't needed to release my beast in a while. He doesn't like your tone, just so you know."

"What are you going to do about this?" Nick asked, trying to rein in his anger. He didn't want an Alpha on Alpha ght, and have his Mate see him at odds with his alpha. Not when she was one of his highest ranked warriors. It probably wouldn't go down so well.

Alpha Corey rubbed his chin thoughtfully, then sighed "Ask her I guess." Then he turned and walked back into the packhouse.

Nick was hot on his heels. He stood patiently while Alpha Corey went through what appeared to be roster paperwork. "Ah, she is on border patrol tonight, I'll link her to come here. Wait a minute please."

It wasn't a long conversation, but Nick could tell from the different facial expressions crossing the man's face, that he was not happy, and the conversation was not going as he thought it might. When his eyes returned to Nick, he rubbed a hand over his face and shook his head. "I can't pull her off patrol tonight, there will be more rogue wolves about with the mating ball in full force, but she's agreed to come directly after patrol."

"Did she admit to it?" he practically growled.

"Not exactly."

"What does that mean? Not exactly. Either she did or she didn't." This pack was infuriating to be in.

"Lucinda did not, but her wolf likely took offence and did the damage. I'll pay for it to be xed, of course, have that door removed rst thing in the morning and replaced within 24 hours. The paint job could take a few days though."

"Is her wolf so disrespectful to all Alphas?"

"No, just you, it seems." The man actually half laughed.

Nick was glaring at him. "Are you even going to punish her? Fix the door, I'll get the paint job sorted out in my pack."

"Of course I will...you can suggest appropriate punishment, and I'll decide if it's fair, but remember you disrespected her rst."

"That's bullshit, she started this little war. That day she put an arrow two inches from my eye."

"Be thankful it wasn't in your eye. She must have been in a good mood that day." Alpha Corey chuckled.

"Excuse me!" Nick was angry now. How does one bloody she-wolf get away with so much...his brain was ticking now...Oh! she was probably his daughter, Nick thought. Great an unruly Alpha female.

"Lucinda doesn't miss Nicholas, she trained six hours a day, six days a week for years to get to where she is now. That arrow, two inches from our eye, was a warning shot, which I believe you never saw coming. Therefore, if she had wanted to kill you. You, son, wouldn't be standing here, you would be dead right now. Don't you think?"

Nick already knew this, he just didn't like it, but knew it to be true. He very well could have died that day, and it pissed him off. How had he not seen them? He knew that all their scents had been masked, as had his team, but he had not seen her at all. She had seen them though, and it bothered him to no end, that yes, the damned she-wolf in question, had beaten him that day.

Put his own blade right through his own shoe, between his toes, she was damned good, and she'd been taunting him for the fun of it, in all likelihood. He had intended to take her out that day with his blade. Only to have her move out of the way and let it sail on past. He had missed his mark; and that just never bloody happened.

"Not to mention at the time. Also, wolf-less." Alpha Corey was smiling big now.

"What?"

"Yes, Alpha Nicholas, you were beaten by a wolf-less female. And I believe she is still winning this war you have. Being that you're in here all pissed off, and she is out there laughing fully amused."

"Hang on, wolf-less, but if her wolf scratched up your car?" he was very confused. Didn't Alpha Corey say she had been training for years to get this good?

"Yes son, only got her wolf a few months ago. Actually, the full moon after your little encounter, I do believe."

How could he have been beaten by a wolf-less female? He was completely dumb-struck. His anger was completely gone, his shock at this little bit of information had rendered him almost speechless. "What time in the morning?" he asked, still frowning at the information he'd just learned.

"0630, by the time she comes in."

"I'll be here 0615 then." he walked out of the oce, damned she-wolf, hadn't even been a she-wolf that day.

He linked Jeremy 'That mutt, ruined my car, scratched it up and busted the driver's door handle.'

'Probably should stop calling her a mutt, then boss.' he chuckled back.

'How is my Mate?'

'Fine, I'll let you know if we need help. I'll join the patrol and ght alongside her boss. When are you going to come and claim her.'

'In the morning, if she's on patrol, probably needs to be there, and from what I saw yesterday. I doubt she'd be impressed by us trying to claim her amid rogue attacks.'

'Alright.' Jeremy sounded dubious.

Nick returned to his room, and sank down on his bed. Rip was bringing around in his mind, though he seemed ne with not dashing off to claim his mate. On the bright side, she was a high-ranked warrior and that would mean a strong heir she'd produce. At least she wasn't some prissy princess who would just laze about all the time. Was likely going to want to be out patrolling and that was ne with him. As long as she produced an Heir he didn't care what she did afterwards.