

Chapter 16

Nicola's POV

After I lock him out, I go sit back down.

"Mate!" Freya says excitedly in my head. She's happy he's come back but I'm not near as thrilled. I don't want anything to do with the arrogant asshole at the moment even though every hormone in my body is saying the complete opposite.

"Yeah, not happening." I say back to her.

She whimpers while another wave of heat rips through my body and I groan as sweat starts to soak my clothes. I decide to strip and lay flat on the cold wooden floor but it only gives me temporary relief before another episode hits me. The pain seems to go on forever and my skin is burning up, my mind feeling fuzzy with the effects. I want to jump into a cold shower or an ice bath, or better yet, the male that's right outside my door, but there's no way I'm leaving this room. It's 2 a.m. and the pain that grips my lower abdomen causes me to let out a muffled scream. I can hear Zander's wolf at my door scratching and pacing back and forth, and it almost convinces me to let him in.

He lost his fight with his beast over an hour ago and since then his wolf, who I've learned is named Liam, has been begging me to be let in. His howls are low and sorrowful as he continues to march up and down the hallway just outside my office.

"I'm sorry Liam, I can't." I groan out.

The cries that echo through the building makes me want to give up the fight and welcome him, but I don't. It's no longer Elliot on the other side of the door, but his wolf, and this would only make things more complicated for us once it's all over. He continues to pace the halls for the rest of the night and into the early morning, never ceasing to rest. Around 6 a.m. the pain and heat start to subside and I can hear Liam finally lay down with a thump against my door. An hour later I decide to

put my clothes back on and crack the door open to peak out.

A smokey black wolf is curled tightly into a ball but he lifts his head to meet my gaze when he hears the door opens. His eyes soften when he sees me and I smile gently, unable to hold back the affection I feel for him.

Once he's satisfied I'm alright, his wolf finally gives up control and lets Zander shift back to his human form. He's on his hands and knees once he shifts back and his breathing looks labored. He raises his head up to me and I'm met with sunken eyes, dark bags accompanying underneath them. His hair is sweaty and matted and it seems like he lost 20 lbs overnight. As bad as he looks, I still can't help but think how stunning he still is. The man is still breathtaking and it pissed me off that he can still make me feel so attached.

He grabs his running shorts beside him and slides them on as he stands up. "Nicola..." he says, his voice sounding pained.

How dare he sound like that; does he not know what I just went through because of him? How much agony I was in all night long because I met got paired with one of the most complicated mates in the history of the world?

"Don't." I snap at him. He looks at me confused and it just feeds into my anger.

"This was all because of you." I ground out. "You have to decide to either let me in or let me go Zander, the choice is yours." His face is expressionless as he stares back at me, like he wasn't expecting me to say any of this, and it pushes me over the edge.

"Do you even care about the fact that I'm your mate? Hell, you've been alone for Goddess only knows how long that I'm sure you it's more of an inconvenience now more than anything." I say pointedly at him.

"That's not true, I do care about you." His voice is soft and I can see guilt in his eyes.

"Yeah, well I refused to be mated to someone who doesn't trust me and is going to treat me as if I'm beneath them." My voice getting louder

with each breath. "And I'm sure as hell not going through that again!" I point back into my office. "So, what do you want to do? Reject each other and-"

"NO!" He yells and within two long strides he's right up to me. "Please, no." His eyes beg me not to finish and I'm shocked at the sudden emotion. "I'll- I'll do anything, for this to work, just don't even think about rejection." He whispers.

I'm not sure what to say or do as I blink at the man in front of me. In all honesty I didn't want to reject him but I also wasn't sure how he actually felt. Until now.

"I'm sorry Nicola..." A tear has started to roll down his face and my heart cracks a little. "I should have come and found you sooner to work through this, but I just wanted to give you space. Instead, I put you through hell and made you question everything about me."

"I just want to be treated equal." I say to him as I reach out and gently touch his cheek, brushing the tear away.

"I can do that." He says and grabs my hand.

"I promise, you'll be treated like a Goddess, perfection, a fucking queen. I can worship the ground you walk on." He brings it to his lips and kisses my palm.

His words are over the top and though I want to believe him, I'm still a bit skeptical. I want to give this a try though. He stands up and captures my lips in a sweet and tender kiss and I can't help but melt into him as my arms wrap around his neck.

"Will you stay with me tonight?" He asks before he leans in for another kiss.

I freeze and my mind replays the last time I stayed. The last time I woke up in his bed and he threw me to the side as if I meant nothing and was just another fling. I take a step back and I can feel his arms tighten around me.

"No, please don't walk away." He says and I can hear the pain in his

voice.

"It's just... too soon." I whisper as I try to take another step back. His hands begin to shake and I can see him visibly swallow the lump in his throat. He stares at me as though I might disappear into thin air and never come back.

"Zander." My voice is calm as I try to sooth his wolf who is clearly fighting him.

His eyes turn a few shades darker and I can tell that he's beginning to lose the internal battle. A low growl starts in his chest as he reaches out to grab me again. His wolf isn't wanting to let me go but there's no way I can just jump back into bed with him. The earlier events made me to think Liam was more gentle and understanding, but I'm coming to the conclusion that I know nothing about either of them.

Power begins to radiate off of him in waves causing me to flinch slightly, reminding me why he's the Alpha King.

"Please don't force me." I say trying to keep my voice steady.

Sadness fills his eyes as realization of what is happening comes to him. "You can go." His hand drops and his body looks defeated.

I quickly begin to walk away, not waiting around for fear that he will suddenly change his mind and chase back after me. I know it probably looks bad but as soon as I turn around, I run, not stopping until I get inside my small apartment and close the door. After a moment, I finally walk into bathroom and head directly to the shower, determined to wash up before I fall into bed for the remainder of the day.

Chapter Comments



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