

Chapter 3

Nicola's POV

I sit in my office working on my computer when I hear a knock on the door.

"Yeah?" I call out loudly.

One of my friends, Parker Gamble, walks in and gives me a smile. He's another one of the warriors I met as soon as I got accepted into the pack.

"Hey Nic, whatcha working on?"

"None of your business." I say and pretend to ignore him.

He laughs lightly and sits on my desk as he shoves papers out of the way.

"Hey! You're going to mess up my drawings Parker! You're too big to be in here anyway without knocking something over." I huff and push at him to move.

He tries to look offended but quickly drops the act as he starts speaking.

"Me and Cameron were going to the range to do some shooting. We're trying to make it into a competition and wanted to see if you'd like to get beat today?"

"Just the two of you?"

"Nah there will be a few other guys but we're the only competition." He winks.

I roll my eyes at him. Cocky bastard.

"So what, you coming or not?" He looks at me expectantly, knowing I

can't turn it down.

"Of course I am. Someone has to knock you down a few pegs." I say as I get up from my chair and stroll out of the office.

A few hours later it's down to Cameron and I for the shoot off.

"I can't believe Cameron is doing better than me right now." Parker whines as we set up the final targets.

"Sucks to suck." I tell him as he continues on his rant.

"And I mean, you're not even a warrior, you're just... just a nerd..."

I side eye him as I pin up my target.

"A nerd that kicked your ass." Cameron snickers.

"Shut up man. You're only saying that because you want to sleep with her."

Cameron shoots me a lopsided grin followed by a wink that would have made me laugh if it wasn't for what happened just days ago.

I study both men as we all continue to walk. Cameron has black hair, cut in a military fade and blue eyes and lashes most women would envy. He's about 6'2" with lots of lean muscle. Parker has dark brown hair and brown eyes. He's tall and built like a tank but still has a bit a baby face. He's cute, but in a brotherly kinda way. Both of them are a year older than me but haven't found their mate yet either. It's hard for the guys here when most of the population is made up of warriors since this isn't a normal pack. Once every so often people will go off and visit another pack in hopes of finding their mate, but it still sometimes takes years before they do. I've recently begun to wonder if I should start doing the same since I'm not getting any younger.

Cameron and I both lay on the ground, holding our guns as we ready to shoot. Each target is set at 500 yards so I adjust my scope by 4 clicks to compensate. There's a slight breeze from my right and I take that into account as well as I aim.

BANG

Half an inch high.

Cameron squeezes off his shot a moment later and we both get up to go look.

We walk down to the targets and I start my victory dance as they come into view. Cameron was an inch left.

"No fucking way." He says as I hold my target up in the air.

"Oh yes way. Now you owe me dinner."

"I would have bought you diner regardless." He grumbles but gives a shy smile.

"Yeah, but it's more fun knowing I beat you as you buy me diner." I say and he rolls his eyes.

"Well guys it's been fun but I gotta get back to work to wrap a few things up." I wave and begin to walk away.

My office is in the main training complex which is located on the western side of pack grounds. The range is right down the hill about 50 yards from the back door so it's really just a quick jog back. The building is four floors high with an open training arena on the bottom level. All the upper floors have rooms on the outer edges of the building that overlook the training area, with walkways and railings that wrap the entire way around. People sometimes stand by the railing and look down to watch the warriors as they train, especially when they're in their wolf form. Being that ECHO contains the best of the best, it really is amazing to see.

I walk into the stairwell and begin climbing up to the third floor so I can put my gun away. I hear someone training below as I open my locker and wonder what's going on since classes are usually finished by this time of day. It's getting close to quitting time and training normally happens in the morning, the building generally quite after lunch time. Making my way down the stairs to my office on the second level, I peak over the railing to look at the man moving around on the ground floor. The building is practically dead from the lack of people at this hour and oddly he's working out all by himself.

He hits a punching bag over and over again with so much force the noise vibrates off the walls. His shirt is soaked in sweat but he doesn't seem to be slowing down anytime soon. I stare in awe at the male who hasn't even seemed to notice I'm being a complete creeper. My wolf also seems to have an interest in him, urging me to get closer so we can get a better look. A slight tingling sensation grazes against my skin as I watch, causing me to look around for the source, but just as quickly as it came, it's gone.

I turn and stare back down at the man who goes to hit the bag once more but stops. His head suddenly snaps towards me and I'm startled by his quick movement. This soon turns into embarrassment as I realize I've just got caught watching this guy and it's just the two of us around. Now that he's facing me though, I realize it's the same warrior I saw previously when I was training with Cameron.

Our eyes lock for a while before a small smile appears on his face. I smile back down at him before he turns away and continues his work out.

A part of me knows I should just walk away but I can't. I continue to gape at him, his moves lethal and precise, and I'm convinced I've never seen anyone as talented. He'd be an animal in a fight.

Or in the bedroom.

I try to shake that stray thought away as I take in his features. His hair is a light brown and slightly longer than most of the other guys around, like he was due for a haircut a couple weeks ago but hasn't had the chance to go. His eyes are a deep green that reminds me of the forest with a strong, clean-shaven jaw. He's about 6'3" of dense solid muscle, making me think he must be one of the older warriors. Especially with the way he trains.

Knowing I've been staring long enough, I force myself to walk back into my office and shut the door. I need to focus on work.

