

Chapter 38

Nicola's POV

My chest is tight with anticipation as I continue to stare out the bedroom window. I feel completely useless not being able to do anything while my mate is out wagging war. Freya paces back and forth in my head, telling me something isn't quit right. My anxiety is going through the roof and I know I can't sit in this room any longer.

I desperately want Zander to come back just so I can make sure that's he okay, but I also know he was born for bigger things. My heart still aches to hold him, to breath in his scent and ease my worries. He's become my security blanket that I didn't realize I've been so reliant on.

Stepping around the room, I take a deep breath as I open the bedroom door. My strength has greatly improved in the last two weeks but it still doesn't take a whole lot for me to get winded.

I carefully make my way down the hall to the top of the stairs and pause to look down. The air seems charged and it's making be feel like an intruder in my own home. I slowly make my way to Zander's office and pause at the door. Closing my eyes, I breathe in his scent that seems to seep through the wood and it gives me a little comfort.

Pushing inside, I try to make my way to his desk as quickly as I can, but my legs are still refusing to work as fast as my brain does. Once I reach the edge, I yank the drawer open and grab the loaded .38 that he has hidden away. Movement in the hall causes me to snap my head up and my breathing stops. My eyes search the doorway but I hear nothing, nor can I pick up a scent of anyone else. I gradually make my way over to the door, hand ready on the gun, when more movement outside of the window catches my eye.

The window in Zander's office gives you a perfect view of the entire Northern side of the pack and it might be one of the best rooms in the house. Miles and miles of slowly rolling hills finally collide with lush

green pines and oaks as the forest continues for another 10 miles before reaching a small river where the border to his territory lies.

My eyes widen as I see hundreds of men start to slowly filter out of the trees, and judging by the growl coming from Freya, they're not the pack warriors. I rush out into the hallway and to the front door before I stop to catch my breath. There's no way I can protect myself if I stay inside the pack house and I know I need to get to the training building where I at least have access to the armory. Even though I'm still recovering, I know I can at least make it to my office. I'm too weak right now for hand to hand fighting, but if there's one thing I can still do, it's pull a trigger.

By the time I reach the side door of the training room, I'm breathing hard and my legs are on fire with exertion they aren't used to. It took me twice as long as it normally does to reach the building but all that matters is I made it. I turn back and can no longer see the men approaching but I can feel they are already much closer.

My muscles protest as I make my way inside and I have to sit down on the stairs momentarily to rest. Tears prick my eyes from the frustration of feeling so damn weak as I drop my head into my hands. ①

"I'm so sorry Zander." I whisper to myself.

Pain and guilt washes through me as I think about my strong, fearless mate. He oozes confidence and power with every step he takes and I've never felt more unworthy of him than I do at this minute. As he leads almost a thousand of the strongest men into battle, fighting for the entire werewolf species, I'm struggling to just walk up some stairs.

A strangled sob leaves me as I think about how helpless I am at this moment. My legs are already exhausted and I'm realizing I might not even be able to make it up the steps to the armory. A hand gently touches my shoulder causing me to snap out of my breakdown as I jump. My heart races as I stare up at a small boy who's looking back at me with concern.

"Are you okay?" His voice is soft and innocent.

My confusion is at an all time high as I stare at the child in front of me, who is clearly not a wolf.

"What are you doing here?" I look around before hoping up to lock the door we both just came through. "It's not safe for you to be here. How did you get here?"

"I- I know. I'm just tired of always being left behind so I followed my father here." There's guilt and also slight irritation in his voice that would cause me to smile if under different circumstances.

"That's because it's way too dangerous for you right now!" I grab his arm, trying to force him to look at me.

"It's not dangerous! I train all the time with my father!" He narrows his eyes as if I just insulted his manhood even though he can't be more than 10 years old. Probably younger.

I sigh.

"But this isn't training honey, it's war. It's different."

I can see the confusion all over his face as he steps back.

"War? What do you mean?" He looks skeptic, as if I might attack him now.

"Yes, war." I say slowly. "The Fae King has declared war against us. He wants to destroy the werewolves and more specifically, kill the Alpha King." I try to hide the pain in my voice but fall short.

"No. But he- he wouldn't." He looks dazed and hurt. "He said it was just training. He- he promised."

Tears prick his eyes and my heart aches as I feel the overwhelming urge to pull the boy into a hug.

"I'm sorry honey." I whisper and reach out to him.

I hold him in my arms and rub his back as he sniffs into my shirt. The sounds of distant yelling outside makes my head snap up and instinct cause my arms to tighten protectively around the child as I stand up, suddenly gaining a burst of newfound energy.

"Come with me." I try to climb the stairs as fast as I can with the boy

close on my heels.

My legs scream at me once I finally reach the door of the armory, but I know I can't stop. I grab my two pistols and slide them into the waistband of my pants before grabbing a M24. The boy looks around the room in awe and I smile at him.

"Have you ever shot a gun?" I ask him and he shakes his head no.

I decide to grab a 6 inch blade knife instead.

"Here. Just in case." I hand it to him and he grins.

We head out into the hall and down to the far end of the building where the roof access ladder is. I take a deep breath as I sling my rifle over my shoulder to prepare for the climb up. Thankful it's a straight vertical ladder, which means I'll be able to use more of my upper body while climbing to pull me up.

Crawling on my hands and knees once I reach the top, I'm panting as I slide my gun to the ground. I shoot up and look around when I realize I haven't heard the boy come up yet but soon let out a sigh of relief when I see him a few feet from me looking at me, again, with concern.

"Are you okay?" He frowns as he eyes my body for unseen injuries.

"I'll be fine." I give him a reassuring smile. "And you'll be okay too. Just stay close alright?"

He's unsure but doesn't say anything as he looks around.

I watch as hundreds of Fae approach the pack house and I'm thankful I trusted my gut and decided to leave. Anxiety courses through me as I wonder where Zander and the soldiers are and I pray the worst hasn't happened. My gaze shifts to the tree line and I can feel Freya on full alert as movement surges out from out of the woods.

ECHO warriors.

I look through my scope and am relieved to see my mate running, leading the entire pack. Worry and anger is etched across his handsome face as he slowly gains on the Fae a few miles ahead.

"What's your name?" I put my gun down as I turn to the boy.

He sits up straighter and puffs his chest out slightly as he gives me a beaming smile and holds out his hand for me to shake. It makes me want to laugh.

"Locke." He says.

"Nice to meet you Locke. I'm Nicola." I smile and shake his small hand.

Chapter Comments



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