

Changeling Press

SOPHIA
TITHENIEL

LAST
NIGHT STAND



Dance Wars 4: Last Night Stand

Sophia Titheniel

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Dance Wars 4: Last Night Stand

Sophia Titheniel

It's been a year since Lachlan first set foot in the Chlodwig -- and set his eyes on Adair. What started as a down and dirty one night stand has grown into something more, but what they have can't last forever -- not when their lives are so diametrically opposed. Knowing Adair won't listen to any reasoning of his, and that he's not ready to take that step that will take him away from his life as scavenger and dance warrior, Lachlan decides it's time to take action.

It's a win all, lose all bet when Lachlan walks in the Chlodwig with a crew of his own, challenging Adair in a dance fight that will either cost him his lover, or win him forever...

Chapter One

Lachlan wakes up first. The light filters through the half closed blinds, and he blinks, stretching lazily, like a cat. Adair's lying on his back, still naked, the sheet barely hanging in there, covering his lower body. Lachlan pushes himself up on his elbows, looking down at Adair with a half-formed smile.

Adair's dark hair is messy and damp with sweat. Lachlan strokes it back off his face, lingering on the prickle of stubble along his jaw line. He wishes it were so easy. He looks up at the flickering lights and sighs, placing a quiet kiss over the curve of Adair's hair before trying to stand up.

His back gives Lachlan a very strong signal that once again, riding the bike is going to be a motherfucking bitch for the rest of the week, but instead of cursing a blue streak as he would usually do, he brings his fingers around, feeling the burn of Adair's presence between his butt cheeks.

Christ, he can feel himself hardening already. Every time he has to leave, it feels like he's ripping something out of his chest. He pulls his fingers out and whimpers softly at the loss. He has to get going; he can't linger. He stands and wobbles to his jeans, but before he can slide them on, strong, firm hands wrap around his hips, and he's pulled back against a solid, sculpted body.

"Not even a goodbye kiss?" Adair whispers roughly in his ear.

Lachlan grins. "Goodbye kisses turn mostly into goodbye fucks," he murmurs, pushing back against him, relishing in the closeness.

"Never heard you complain before."

Lachlan shakes his head lightly, his smile lazy. "You're pretty decent, I'll give you that."

Adair's growl is playful, but he still bites down on the curve of Lachlan's shoulder, whipping him around and pushing him up against the small chest of drawers Lachlan tossed his clothes over in his frenzy.

"What about -- ah," Lachlan moans, immediately spreading his legs wide open to accommodate Adair between them. "What about security and..."

Whatever else Lachlan might have wanted to say is lost in a moan. Adair grabs his hips and pulls him close, grinding their groins together. Adair chuckles and sucks on Lachlan's neck. There's nothing that gets Lachlan hot faster than Adair's mouth on his neck, his teeth sinking deep into the tissue of Lachlan's skin. Lachlan groans and jerks forward, his cock now fully erect and rubbing deliciously against the groove of Adair's hip.

Adair's mouth travels from Lachlan's neck down to his chest. Lachlan wraps his legs around Adair's back, yanking him closer. "Come on!" Lachlan fists his hands in Adair's hair. Their mouths mash together as Lachlan ruts up against him, already lost in his blatant need.

"Fuck, what is it that you do to me?" Adair groans, nudging at Lachlan's chin.

Lachlan grins, shaky, his fingernails sinking into the muscles of Adair's shoulder as he leans back, his ass jutting out on the edge of the drawers, rubbing teasingly over the plum-shaped head of Adair's dick. "Pretty much what you do to me," he whispers, his body shaking with a shiver when Adair's dick slides between his butt cheeks.

Adair grunts and moves one hand up Lachlan's thigh, finding his hole and thrusting one finger up to the knuckle. Lachlan is still open and raw from the night before, and he whimpers, his forehead falling against Adair's shoulder as he wills his body to relax.

Adair mouths his way down to Lachlan's chest, sucking one nipple as he moves his finger in and out of Lachlan's body, each thrust earning a whimper from Lachlan's bitten-red lips.

Lachlan groans and clutches at Adair's biceps, his eyes squeezed shut. The pain prickles down his spine, adding to the edge of his arousal. Lachlan's cock is hard and

curved against his belly, pressed between his and Adair's abs, pre-come making the friction hotter, sweeter.

"Can I?" Adair murmurs, his voice low, adding another finger to the knuckle.

Lachlan's heart skips a beat. Adair rarely, if ever, asks anything of the sort. It's like a dollop of warm honey dropping onto his tongue. He nods, shakily, but doesn't say a word. His voice would betray the butterflies flying wild in his stomach.

Adair pulls back, laying a kiss on Lachlan's lips before pulling his fingers out, arranging Lachlan's legs over his shoulders as he lines himself up.

Lachlan forces his eyes open and stares into Adair's face, feeling himself float as a rush of sensation hits him, as if he's on a rollercoaster. He tries to keep staring but as Adair's huge dick sinks into him, his eyes roll back and he lets out a long, guttural groan, head thumping against Adair's forehead as he pants, harsh, ragged breaths blowing against Adair's lips.

"So hot," Adair groans, nibbling on Lachlan's lower lip as he grabs his hips, pulling him into his thrust. "Gorgeous. Mine."

Lachlan keens, grabbing a handful of Adair's hair. "More, Adair, please. *Please.*"

Adair nods, shushing Lachlan with a powerful kiss, their teeth clashing together with muffled groans. He pulls out completely, then slams back in, the chest of drawers rattling noisily against the wall as the force of Adair's thrust sends Lachlan reeling. Lachlan's feet dangle helplessly against Adair's back, his moans growing louder and louder as Adair picks up the pace, each thrust harder and faster than the one before.

"Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck," Adair chants, gripping Lachlan as he guides him down on his dick with each roll of his hips. Lachlan whimpers, clinging to Adair's back, arching into his touch as Adair hoists Lachlan's legs further up his shoulders, spreading him wider and hitting Lachlan's prostate.

Lachlan cries out sharply, his whole body seizing, hot tingles curling up at the base of his spine and spreading through his body with every forceful push. He tries to rock back on Adair's dick, but he nearly falls off the chest of drawers, his ankles

crossing at the back of Adair's neck for support, hands gripping tight, slippery with sweat, as he tries to keep his balance.

The sharp movement has Adair sinking in even deeper, his balls slapping against the back of Lachlan's ass, breathy moans the only added sound in the tiny room as Adair's hips snap in a staccato rhythm. "Adair," Lachlan groans, his mouth open in a silent O. "Adair -- ah -- ah --"

Lachlan's whole body tightens painfully as his orgasm rushes through him, robbing him of breath. Everything whitens, pleasure sizzling through his veins as Adair keeps ramming into him, every thrust matched by the continuous *thump, thump, thump* of the chest of drawers against the wall.

"Come on," Lachlan moans, yanking Adair's face up to pant against his mouth, their tongues meeting halfway. "Come -- on -- Adair --"

With a grunt, Adair pulls Lachlan bodily off the chest and impales him on his dick, making both of them cry out at the sensation. Adair comes, shooting messy and hot in Lachlan's ass, holding him up as they both shake with release.

Lachlan whimpers and clings to Adair, his body shaking with the aftershocks. Adair holds him up, his were strength helping him to keep balance.

They stumble backwards onto the bed, Adair hitting the mattress first, Lachlan falling on top of him with an *oomphf*. Adair smiles -- Lachlan can feel it underneath his cheek. He lifts his head a few inches, feeling boneless and sated, and pushes back Adair's sweaty hair. "I don't think I can ride anywhere now."

Adair snorts, his hands trailing down Lachlan's back, over the rounded curve of his ass. "Guess you can't."

"Sneaky motherfucker," Lachlan grins, sitting up far enough to kiss him. It's slow and quiet, at complete odds with the intense orgasm they just shared. Adair pulls out and hoists Lachlan higher on his chest.

Lachlan's smile fades as Adair's eyes slowly flutter closed. This is going to kill him at some point, either because he misses Adair so much he does something stupid, or because the scavengers catch him. Lachlan sighs and closes his eyes, resting his head

on Adair's chest, his heartbeat lulling him to sleep. He needs to do something, and do it soon.

* * *

Lachlan's ride to Baltimore is quicker than he would have thought, especially considering how long and hard he and Adair fucked when they woke up. It's like neither of them want to let go, ever, but Lachlan needs to get back. He knows Connors is already suspicious of his delays, especially since the time Lachlan gave Keith the slip, disappearing off the map for days -- enough for the station to believe Lachlan had fallen prey to the scavengers.

It happened only the one time, Lachlan thinks, disgruntled, but he still smiles at Thorn as he pulls in the Dulles station garage.

"Thought you'd never show up," Thorn says by way of a greeting. They bump knuckles, slapping each other on the back.

"You knew I would," Lachlan replies with a grin. "Home sweet home."

"If you can call this dump home."

"Hey," Lachlan laughs as they walk through the doors and up the stairs to the main level. "Connors is gonna get your hide for saying that. I hope you realize that."

Thorn sniggers. "I heard you and Keith got along really well."

Lachlan rolls his eyes at him. "Son of a bitch. Rae told you, didn't he?"

"You know 'em psychics. It's all about gossip."

Lachlan shakes his head as they walk through the dorms and into the waiting room where Connors is handing out packages to the riders who are already there. He scowls at Lachlan, who turns his head the other way to hide his grin.

"You are going to hear it all." Thorn flops down on the couch, his Mohawk all over the place. "And I'm going to enjoy every minute."

"Fuck you." Lachlan hits him over the back of his head and taking the armchair next to him. "I did my job, got back in time, what more does he want?"

"Maybe an explanation as to why it takes you four days for a five hundred mile run that you used to do in a day and half?"

Lachlan snorts and looks up to see Connors standing beside him with his fists on his hips. "I got old."

"Not funny. You know how fucking dangerous the cities are. Why you always stick around Washington is beyond me."

"The pay's good," Lachlan lies out of habit, and he can hear Thorn sniggering, the mofo. He kicks his elbow off the armrest, and Thorn loses balance, tripping to the ground.

Laugh now, you smooth bastard.

"Lachlan, it's not funny. We don't have enough resources. We can't afford to have you run off for days at a time."

"So maybe it's time for me to go on holiday," Lachlan replies without missing a beat.

Thorn blinks. Connors gapes.

Lachlan wishes he had a camera.

"What?"

"Unison. That's cute," Lachlan grins, tossing his head back and resting it on his crossed hands. "You done?"

"Holiday? You don't get holidays, you don't get sick leave and you don't get pension. You get to get out alive, if you're lucky, and a few bucks on top."

Lachlan smiles again. "Maybe I want to quit."

It was probably worth saying if only to see Connors' blood pressure rise to the point of explosion. Lachlan tries not to laugh, and waits. The silence is deafening. Even riders Lachlan doesn't know have stopped whatever it is they were doing to listen in.

"Quit?" Connors yells at the top of his lungs. "You don't quit! Pony expresses don't quit! You've been doing this since your parents died in the fire. It's been twelve years! You don't quit out of the blue."

"You done?" Lachlan says, his eyes narrowed on Connors. "One, it's not out of the blue. Two, maybe I'm tired of risking my ass. And for what?"

"He has a point," Thorn says with a small, twisted grin. Lachlan has no idea if he does it only to rile Connors up further or because he believes it.

"What?"

Thorn's grin widens.

Okay, so maybe it's a bit of both.

Lachlan looks over at Connors. He's so red in the face Lachlan suspects he might blow a fuse. "You -- I -- you --" Connors splutters, flailing his arms around like windmills. He looks around at the other riders that have stopped in their tracks to watch. "What the hell are you staring at? Get back to work!"

The crowd disperses. Lachlan smiles and stretches, pulling himself to his feet. "I'll see you later."

"Coming with you," Thorn says, mimicking Lachlan's move. "See ya later, Cons."

They walk out amidst the curious looks and smothered laughter from the other riders, Lachlan marching out first.

It feels like the end, and at the same time, it feels like a beginning.

* * *

"So where to next?"

Adair shakes his head. They've been cruising the countryside for a day, but there's been no sign of prey anywhere. Morgan is driving the battered truck, the whistling of the wind through the broken windows the only sound in the cabin.

The crew's morale is pretty low. Adair knows he's to blame for the failure in their latest hunt, but not one of them has said a word. They either know better by now, or they're too tired to muster any will to argue.

Maybe it's a mixture of both.

"Why don't we try down toward Baltimore," Ezra suggests from the back.

"Too risky," Adair answers immediately.

"But it might be worth it. They all have to get out of Dulles at some point."

"You really want to attack one of the biggest stations in the Northeast?" Dagan says, a hint of sarcasm tinting his drawl.

"They're all holed up there, possibly armed. We can't risk it," Adair repeats. "I know we fell short on the last job, but we can find something around here without going *hara-kiri* on the riders' best equipped station."

Ezra nods and leans back in the rear of the truck. "What about the Wars?"

Adair tries hard not to betray a flicker of emotion at the suggestion. Lachlan has been gone a week, and he's already missing him like a lost limb. If they get back to Washington, lay low, earn easy cash at the Wars...

"We could head back," Dagan says, sounding excited. "If the bets are anything like they were last time, it beats anything we could scrounge up on the road."

"You think so?" Adair says, fighting to keep his voice level. He's gotta be careful. If he sounds too willing or too eager, they might suspect something's up. His crew isn't dumb. They know him, despite how Adair likes to think differently, and since the Gale incident, with the one-on-one challenge that resulted in Gale's estrangement from the crew, Adair knows they're feeling a change in him. They just don't know what, or would rather not question it.

"Well, it might be good to save up some," Ezra concedes, leaning between Morgan and Adair's seats to look at Adair. "It's getting hot as fuck around here anyway, and if we keep going around in circles we'll run out of gas, and that's gonna be something else we have to deal with."

Adair nods, pretending to think about it. "I suppose."

"If we go back now," Morgan says, sounding a little hesitant, "we could make it to the Chlodwig before midnight..."

"Still in time to enter the challenge," Dagan finishes, looking expectant.

Adair counts backwards from ten in his head. *Don't sound overexcited. Keep your cool. Easy does it.* "Right. Turn this bitch around. We're going back to Washington."

The truck splutters and coughs, clearly not keen on the sharp turn Morgan forces it to do, but the atmosphere inside the cabin feels at least a ton lighter. Adair closes his eyes and tries to hide his smile. If there's a War on tonight, they're going to win it.

* * *

Lachlan knocks at Eric's door, Thorn right at his heels. He feels strangely calm, Zen even. He knows what Eric is going to say, he knows it just as well as he knows himself, but at the same time he can't help but hope.

"I hope you have a bloody good reason for waking me up like this," Eric says, disgruntled as he pulls open the door of his garage.

"Dude, it's like, noon. What the hell are you doing still asleep?"

"He probably has that dude he's been seeing over," Lachlan chuckles, quickly ducking the blow that Eric aims at his head.

"Ohh, is it?" Thorn asks, grinning playfully and dancing out of reach as Eric tries to smack him, too. "That *is* interesting. Who is he?"

"Shut up," Eric grumbles, wiping his hands over the cloth tied around his waist and letting them in.

"That's so eloquent. I'm sure he was impressed with your conversation."

Lachlan chuckles and goes to sit on the top bunk above the mechanic's workbench. "We need to talk to you."

"About?"

"Lachlan quit," Thorn sprawls on the rotating chair, straddling it. "And he has a very good reason apparently, but he hasn't told me yet, so I'm hoping he might tell you."

Eric stops dead in his tracks, and turns around, eyes wide. "You... quit?"

"That I did." Lachlan grins and tosses a baseball at him. "And trust me when I say I won't regret it."

Eric catches the ball with a frown. He pulls up a chair and flops down onto it, throwing him a shrewd look. "You're on to something."

"Correct."

"And I want to know, so spill," Thorn says, stretching like a cat.

Lachlan takes a moment to breathe. This is it. "It's Adair."

Neither Thorn nor Eric say a thing. Actually, they both stare at him without breaking eye contact, relaxed, waiting.

"I need to get him out of Washington."

"Why?"

Lachlan tries to say it without sounding like a fool. "Because I'm in love with him." Mission failed.

"Right." Eric says, raising one eyebrow at him. "And?"

"He'll never get out of there willingly. He thinks he's a monster -- not a word!" he admonishes, raising his finger to point at Thorn, who closes his mouth sharply. "And this -- every time something happens, and I have no idea where he is, what he's doing, what's going on, who he's with..."

"So, in a word, you're a jealous girlfriend."

Lachlan glares. "Will you shut the fuck up and let me talk?" They both spread their arms at the same time. Lachlan nods his thanks and continues. "I already know he won't leave. He's got his crew..." He hesitates. He knows how accepting Thorn and Eric have been so far of his -- thing -- with Adair. The rest of the scavengers wouldn't go down as well as either of them. "And he just won't do it."

He waits for a reaction. Eric is the first to speak. "So why'd you quit?"

"I need to win him over."

Thorn blinks. "You couldn't have given him better head?"

Lachlan kicks him. "He won't do it unless I find a way where he can't say no."

"Oh man," Eric groans, dragging his hand over his face. "I see where this is going..."

"Shut up, let him finish."

"I need to win him over in a fight." He swallows. "On his ground, with his rules."

Thorn and Eric stare blankly at him. "A fight? Lachlan, you weigh like what, a buck fifty, wet? He'll knock you off your ass."

"Not that sort of fight," Lachlan says, a tentative, but steady smile growing on his face. "A dance fight. Down at the Chlodwig."

Chapter Two

"You're mental."

Lachlan's smile widens. He was expecting that. "Nope."

"You're crazy," Thorn says again. "Ballistic. Mad."

"Well, thank you for the encouragement."

Eric stands and goes to pick up a dusty bottle of JD and three mismatched glasses. He fills them up to the brim and keeps the larger one for himself, downing it as though it were a one-shot.

"Right, so let me get this straight," he says, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand. "You actually want to enter a... what is it called? War? Dance war? And you expect to win against Adair?"

Lachlan scratches his chin. "Something like that."

"You're delusional," Thorn says with a glare toward Eric, as though somehow, Lachlan's madness could be his fault. "Didn't you say they're like, champions?"

"He is," Lachlan admits, his thoughts flying back to the very first time he laid eyes on Adair. The music, the sweat, the thick scent of sawdust and musk, Adair's eyes gleaming in the darkness, his limbs rippling with each perfectly coordinated step...

"Lachlan!" Eric's fingers snap in front of his eyes. "Enough with the testosterone already. Focus."

"I am focused!"

"Not on the conversation at hand," Thorn says, grabbing the baseball from Eric and tossing it toward Lachlan. "You're saying that you want to challenge a group of scavengers in their fucking nest, and you expect to win the fight and for Adair not to flip out on you?"

Well, there's some truth to that... Lachlan shakes his head. "I just know I can't go on like this. It's driving me crazy. I know it's suicidal but it's the one way I'll be able to be with him."

Eric fills his glass again. "Lachlan, you're my friend. And you know I tried --"

"We both did," Thorn interjects.

"But you have to be realistic here man. You already put Adair on the spot once."

"Things have changed," Lachlan mutters. "He's changed, too."

"So what do you wanna do? Just walk into the Chlodwig and risk your life as the stupid fuck you are? You need to do better than that if you really want to give this... thing you have going on a chance. It's one against five, and they'll fight dirty. You know they will."

Lachlan flops back on the bed with a sigh. "It wouldn't be one against five. That's not how it works." He looks down at them. "I would need a crew."

Crickets.

Lachlan waits.

One, two, three --

"Oh God. Oh no. No no no no, don't even think about it." Eric says, backing away really slowly. "No, Lachlan. No."

"I didn't say anything!"

"You *hinted*. That's enough for me."

Thorn frowns, clearly not yet onto Lachlan's master plan. "Why? What is he hinting?"

Lachlan can't help but chuckle. Sometimes Thorn can be lost in his own little world where rum sprinkles from cotton candy clouds.

"He just said he needs a crew!" Eric flails, grabbing a screwdriver and waving it around to stress his point.

Thorn turns around and blinks at Lachlan. "And?"

"And he wants us to help him out with that, for cryin' out loud!"

"But we can't dance."

Lachlan bursts out laughing.

Eric stares at Thorn as though he's suddenly put on a tutu and started doing the can-can. "Are you serious? This is all you got to say?"

"I can't dance either," Lachlan adds.

"And it didn't even occur to you that it might be a problem?" Eric asks, the color of his face a reddish tinge very reminiscent of the one Connors sported only minutes before.

"I can learn," Lachlan says with a shrug. "If they can do it, why not us?"

Eric simply stares. He turns to Thorn for support, but Thorn has his head tilted backwards, as he usually does when he thinks. "You know, he does have a point."

Eric gapes. "I'm sorry?"

"They aren't smarter than us, are they? And hell, music is music is music. Bet you sway your hips just fine." Thorn grins. "We could ask your mysterious man..."

Eric aims the screwdriver at him, but Thorn ducks easily, chuckling. "He might even be able to help us out."

"No he won't. And there is no *we*. I am not into the *we*."

Lachlan sighs and pulls himself up. "Eric," he says quietly. "Look man, I know it sounds mental, okay? But I need help. I can't do this on my own. And I can't let go of him."

Thorn nods as though it makes sense, and that gives Lachlan a little bit of hope. He turns toward Eric, waiting. "Please?" he murmurs, feeling like a fifteen year old. "I need you, man."

* * *

From outside, no one could tell the ramshackle building with the boarded up windows was anything more than that. A hole in the wall where cheap booze is served at all hours, and where people from all up and down the coast take refuge, blending into the crowd.

However, the moment you stepped in, it all changed. The music, the mass of people, the rhythm, the smell of bodies pressing together as they swayed to the

thrumming of the bass that blasts from the speakers. Everything was in a haze, it slid right inside of you and it turned your head around.

Adair steps down from the staircase and breathes in the smell. Two days on the road with the crew, and he can't believe he actually missed this place.

"How's it going?" Adair greets the broker and bumps knuckles with the bartender, getting his first pint.

"Slow night," the bartender replies, filling up two glasses and handing them to Morgan and Ezra. "There's no one really into it. Low bets, too."

Adair nods. It's not a Friday, so he'd been expecting that. "Think we can raise a little hell?" he asks his companions.

Dagan grins. "I think we can do whatever the fuck we please."

Morgan raises his glass in agreement. Adair takes a bottle of Jack from the bar, nodding to the bartender, and they move back to their usual booth.

"You're glad we're back, ain't ya?" Ezra teases as they sit down.

"Easy money," Adair says with a shrug. "Nothing better, is there?"

"Agreed," Dagan downs his glass. "Look at those losers," he adds, nodding at the crowd filling up the dance floor. "Bet if we let them think they're winning, when we challenge them the odds will be high enough for us to make a couple of bucks."

Adair toasts him. "I always appreciate someone who's good at math."

Ezra grins, bright and wide. "So what? Give or take another hour?"

"Something like that," Adair nods. "Then we can go wipe the floor with their sorry asses."

They raise their glasses in celebration, downing them and following them with a shot of whiskey each. Adair waits, just as he said he would, his eyes fixated on the various crews challenging one another back and forth on the floor, his brain miles away.

For the second time in less than two months, he's purposefully failed a hunt. He knows he's being too damn irresponsible, but at the same time he can't help himself. He still remembers Lachlan's determination, the bittersweet parting after the last moon.

Cedric's less than gentle invasion of their lives certainly hasn't helped either his or Lachlan's paranoia. He shakes his head and sighs, taking another swing of JD.

He can't forget Lachlan's confession, no matter how hard he tries to. He wants to put it at the back of his mind, he wants to just forget about Lachlan's voice, his whispering, the look in his eyes before he mounted his bike and disappeared.

Shit. Adair looks at the half empty bottle and pours each of them another glass.

"Are you sure there's nothing bugging you? You look... distant."

Damn Ezra and his fucking perception.

"I hate losing ground," Adair says, trying to sound as dry as he would when he's upset about the job. "No matter how many Wars we win... black market's drying up."

Ezra nods, as though Adair makes perfect sense, and Adair busies himself with his shot again. Dagan nudges him across the table and nods toward the floor.

As good a time as it's ever gonna be. Adair stands and walks off, motioning for the crew to follow. They rise one by one. The moment they step on the dance floor, the crowd roars in approval, and Riff, the broker, moves around to collect the handfuls of dollar bills shoved in his bucket at the mention of Midnight's crew entering the challenge.

Adair eyes the crew who've been winning so far. This is something he can do, and it's something that will give them enough money to stay put for another week. Maybe two.

Maybe they'll hold out until the next moon, and hopefully he won't need to clash with any riders before then. At that point, the rider clashing with him will be the one that he wants to.

Needs to.

* * *

Eric, Lachlan and Thorn sit around a whiskey bottle and a bunch of spare bike parts and utensils. Eric takes a swig from the bottle then glares at Lachlan through bleary eyes. "I must be nuts."

"No, you're just a good friend," Thorn grins, raising his glass to him.

"We're going to die," Eric says, matter-of-factly. "We're never going to walk out of here in one piece. They'll tear us apart. You know they will. Not only in the ring --"

"On the floor," Lachlan corrected.

"Whatever. They'll never let us just stroll into their stronghold without batting an eye."

"Lachlan said everyone could compete."

"It's true," Lachlan says. "There are rules --"

"Set by them!"

"Yes, but that doesn't mean they don't have to respect them," Lachlan insists, looking at Eric over the rim of his glass. "Come on man, gimme a break. You said you'd do it."

"Correction. I gave in because I don't want to have your death on my conscience, but that doesn't mean I agree with your suicidal tendencies."

Thorn chuckles. "Man, we know the drill. Not like you don't repeat yourself."

"Logorrhea," Lachlan says with a nod. "Look it up."

"I know what that is," Eric grumbles.

"Look, first things first -- we need a back up. Someone who can watch our back, make sure we get out of Washington."

"I know the place very well," Lachlan says, a little on the defensive now. "I've been going back and forth for months."

"I know," Eric says, giving him the raised eyebrow of disapproval. "I was there."

"Eric has a point, though," Thorn says, massaging his chin, deep in thought. "We need someone who can work with us, anticipate their moves."

Lachlan stares blankly at him. "As in?"

"A psychic," Thorn says, his smile widening. "Someone who can make sure we at least know what they're up to, where they're going, and who can be sure we're not being followed when we leave."

"You think you know anyone who'd be crazy enough to do it?"

Thorn smiles. "Maybe. Provided the right leverage, why not?"

Lachlan just looks at him. "I am not selling my body to Keith."

"He'd do it for free," Thorn assures him. "And I can probably swing in Rae's help, as well."

"There's nothing in this for either of them," Lachlan argues, dejectedly. "You guys are my friends, but they --"

"*They* are your friends too," Thorn says, his voice suddenly softer. "You're just a little slow to catch up on these things."

"And hey, money," Eric adds, grinning and filling up his glass again to escape the emotional moment. "That's a big plus."

"We're gonna get our asses kicked a fair few times," Lachlan says, even though he's trying not to smile too wide. "I doubt any money's going to show up for a while."

"We can handle it." Thorn clasps Lachlan's shoulder. "Let me go talk to Rae, okay? You lay low for a while. I think Connors might want your hide as a trophy to hang behind the counter at the station."

Lachlan snorts. "That sounds like him."

Thorn laughs and finishes his drink before picking up his jacket and walking off toward the exit. Lachlan watches him go, worrying his lower lip with his teeth. He's almost out of the door when Lachlan blurts out, "Thank you."

Thorn stops, giving him one of his looks and a sly smile. "Thought you'd never come out and say it."

* * *

Adair believes in rehearsals. Most of the crew doesn't, but they still show up and humor him when he wants to go over their choreographies beforehand. Adair's pretty sure that helps them out a great deal, especially when they see crews come from afar and forget their steps, or mess up their entrée because they haven't put enough effort in preparing. Adair always smiles, knowingly, and he's ready to throw their losses in his crew's face if needed.

"You think you can still show up tomorrow?" Ezra asks suddenly, stopping mid-turn to face Adair.

"Probably not," Adair says, a shiver going down his spine at the question. There were days where they had been so down in the dumps that they risked it, but Adair's had to be rushed out a little before midnight, when the moon began to rise. He's almost transformed right there on the dance floor. To this day, Morgan says that particular special effect would have them win *everything*.

"So we gotta make the best of it tonight," Dagan says with a bright grin. The kid has been filling out a lot in the past few months. He's still lightning fast, but his muscles have taken on a more defined shape. Good for jumps and turns, fast grips that he couldn't have pulled off before.

"We will," Adair assures them.

"I know Noah's going to be around." Morgan sits on the ground, looking up at Adair. "Is that going to be a problem for us?"

"We don't owe him anything," Adair says, rather harshly. "If he thinks getting hold of riders is that easy, he's welcome to it. I have no one to answer to."

Morgan's eyes widen and he's quick to nod. "Sure. I was just saying --"

"I know." Adair's voice holds an awful finality, and thankfully no one else raises any more questions.

Adair sighs inwardly and gets back into position. This is getting way too dangerous. They have every right to question his latest policy, even if Adair has been smart enough to make it look like it was *their* decision, not his. He knows there are risks involved in shunning Noah for too long, and they don't need that on top of everything else. But the idea of being out there hunting riders makes his skin crawl.

Hopefully he'll see Lachlan tomorrow night and he'll know where not to go to avoid accidentally crossing paths. That should be enough, right?

Right.

Chapter Three

"Is this it?"

Lachlan nods. He could find the Chlodwig blindfolded and on foot. "Yeah."

Keith, Rae and Thorn look strangely intrigued. Eric, however, scoffs. "I can't believe we've been scared to come *here*. And for so long."

Lachlan chuckles, shaking his head. "I told you it wasn't that bad."

"I'll reserve judgment till I'm inside," Thorn says, finally getting off the bike. Everyone else follows his example, and they silently plug in the security codes for each of their steeds.

Lachlan watches them talk quietly and share jokes as their bikes disappear, the familiar illusory metamorphosis of metal curling into junk and rubber almost hypnotizing.

This is it. End and beginning, all at once.

His stomach clenches ominously and he takes a slow, deep breath. It's now or never, yes? They've been working on their routines for a week. He knows that unless the other crews royally suck, they won't get past the first round, but it's all about putting his challenge out. Adair's going to be there, he's going to see. Butterflies flap wildly in his stomach, and he has to close his eyes for a minute, trying to soak everything in.

The chance that this will backfire on him spectacularly are high enough to make his knees go weak, but Thorn slaps him on his back and nods toward the entrance, looking like an eager five year old, and Lachlan takes a deep, calming breath before he follows, with Keith, Rae and Eric marching at his heels.

So what happens now?

Lachlan's become accustomed to Keith talking in his head, so he thinks his answer without saying it out loud, knowing Keith will pluck it out of his mind. *Now we go downstairs, and if everything goes to plan, the Wars will be in full swing.*

And?

Lachlan rolls his eyes, starting down through the trapdoor. *And we will wait until someone loses to sneak in with our challenge.*

They've gone over it at every meeting. The theory is pretty solid, and Lachlan knows it. Now they have to see if the practical side of said theory will fuck them over sideways.

As soon as they step down the narrow staircase, light bulbs flickering ominously with every *thump, thump, thump* filtering from the door, Lachlan feels like a rush of blood has gone to his head. He turns to look at his companions -- his crew -- and downright beams at them, pushing the door open.

"Welcome to the Chlodwig, ladies and gentlemen."

"Watch who you're calling a lady," Eric grumbles, arms crossed before him.

The atmosphere is the same. It doesn't matter how long it's been since the last time Lachlan walked in there, it could as easily have been yesterday for all that's changed. The music, the people, the adrenaline in the air, thick enough to taste it -- everything has stayed the same. Lachlan suppresses a shudder of emotion and he nods toward the bar, his friends in tow.

He can feel eyes on the back of his head, glaring holes, but he doesn't bother turning around. It's not what he's here for, and he would recognize Adair's heated glances in a heartbeat. He slides a ten across the bar to the bearded bartender, asking for tequila. The bartender grunts his answer and places a dusty bottle on the counter, followed by five one-shot glasses.

Lachlan fills them up and passes them around, downing his own in a single gulp, the sweet burn going straight to his gut and up to the tip of his ear, heartening him.

"Another," Rae says enthusiastically, waving his glass under Lachlan's nose. Lachlan has to smile at his enthusiasm. Thorn must have been pretty convincing in his

arguments for Rae to agree to help Lachlan out. Either that, or those psychic kids were even crazier than anyone pinned them as.

The hair on the back of Lachlan's neck suddenly prickles, standing at attention, and he knows he's being watched. He forces himself not to look around, playing it cool, but his heart rate spikes up fast, thundering in his ears.

He knows Keith picked up on it, but he doesn't acknowledge the mental nudge. He's got to wait. He knows who he's dealing with.

"Long time no see."

Lachlan tries not to smirk. He turns, slowly, deliberately, trying not to betray any emotion as he stares in those silver eyes that have owned him since the very first moment they met, right there at the Chlodwig. "Figured we'd check out those Wars everyone talks about," Lachlan answers, his voice surprisingly steady.

Lachlan knows Adair can look intimidating to most people, no matter if he's in his wolf form or human form. He can feel Thorn and Eric staring at him, and Lachlan has no idea if they're glad to finally put a face on the guy or if they're regretting getting involved. Either way, it's too late for a change of heart.

"You must be pretty bold. Or pretty stupid," Adair adds, his eyes gleaming with a light Lachlan can't quite place.

"I pride myself on being both," is Lachlan's answer, and he stands from his stool, looking straight at Adair with a slight grin. Behind Adair stand the three left of his crew, looking as though they wish for nothing more than to run Lachlan over with his own bike.

This could prove interesting.

"Get back on the streets where you belong," Adair whispers, still loud enough for Lachlan to catch the none too subtle warning. "We don't like your kind hanging around here."

Lachlan smirks. "Tsk. And here I was thinking you welcomed new players."

He can sense the change in Adair more than he can see it. He holds his breath, a battle of wills, both of them with their crew at their backs, each of them with their own agenda.

Lachlan will not lower his eyes first.

Adair stares at him, his lips pressed in a tight line, every muscle tensed, poised to strike. It might be just Lachlan's hyperawareness playing tricks on him, but it feels like the whole club has come to a halt just to stare at them.

"You ain't players," Adair finally whispers. "And if you like your face the way it is, you better head out now."

Lachlan lets go of the breath he's been holding, masking it with a chuckle. "And why, pray tell?" He fills up his one shot and gulps it down, his eyes never leaving Adair's. "Afraid of the competition?"

There's a low, possessive growl coming from Adair's throat, and all the blood in Lachlan's veins suddenly rushes to his cock. The possessiveness in Adair's body stance is unmistakable, and it makes Lachlan's head spin.

"You should be the one who's afraid, biker boy," Adair murmurs again, liquid fire in the silver of his eyes.

"We'll see about that," Lachlan whispers back, putting down his glass and nodding to Thorn and the others to follow him.

They walk out on the ring, standing in formation. Lachlan knows they are nervous -- hell, he's nervous, too -- but he knows that they can do it. It's just a matter of getting the ball rolling. From the corner of his eye he sees one of Adair's crew take a step, as though he wants to take up Lachlan's challenge, but Adair puts one hand on his shoulder, pulling him back and shaking his head a little.

Lachlan tries to hold back his grin. So he wants to wait. So far so good.

The music rises in volume, and Lachlan looks around, spreading his arms wide, cocky smile firmly in place as he waits for someone to take up his challenge.

A crew of four steps on the floor before them, their feet thundering in unison on the wooden, sawdust covered ground. Lachlan waits, again, letting them go first. Their

legs kick out in a wild ring, two of the guys sliding on their knees to stand before their companions. Lachlan feels Thorn twitching in impatience behind him, and glances back at him, silently telling him to stay put. They need to let the challengers finish their number before they can take their call.

The choreography is fast paced and wild. Lachlan knows they're not as good as Adair's crew -- hell, he doubts anyone is as good as Adair's crew -- but he can feel that they're fluid, prepared. He knows they *can* win against them, but it's not going to be a walk in the park. They're prepared, but so is every other crew crowding the club.

Lachlan swallows the moment their challengers step back.

It's their turn.

He moves first, Thorn and Rae immediately behind him. He spins on one heel, his leg kicking backwards as he rolls upside down, holding himself up with his hand. Eric and Keith move right beside him, each of them catching one of his legs and twirling Lachlan back up on his feet.

The crowd claps wildly. Lachlan's heart is right in his throat. He knows Adair is staring at him from across the room and he stupidly feels like he needs to do him proud, which is ridiculous because if he can still read Adair's moods, Lachlan's surely in for an earful, if not more.

He definitely hopes for "more."

Eric and Keith hold Lachlan up by his arms; Thorn and Rae roll on their backs and shoot through in between them, using their feet to balance Lachlan, pyramid style. Lachlan hears the roar of the crowd as he jumps down, and ends the routine in a wild spin that lands him straight before his opponent.

There's more clapping and cheering. They all stand back, waiting for someone else to take up their challenge now that the other group has slunk back, defeated.

Lachlan looks across the room, and finds Adair staring at him. The rush of heat that surges through him the moment their eyes meet almost knocks Lachlan over.

Once the night is over, there's gonna be retribution.

Lachlan's not ashamed to admit he's looking forward to that.

* * *

He can't believe his eyes. He can't believe anyone would be so fucking *stupid*.

And look so downright edible while doing so.

Adair shakes his head. Christ, talk about a tight spot. His fist clenches at his sides, jaw set tight, looking at the way Lachlan's leather-clad body sways to the music.

He's getting hard just looking at him. And this is just not what he needs, not right now, not with his whole crew ready to go out on the floor and kick their inexperienced little asses to the curb.

Jesus Christ, he's going to murder Lachlan the moment he gets him alone.

Or fuck him within an inch of his life. Whichever comes first.

"Let's go get them," Ezra hisses in his ear.

Adair knows he can't stall them much longer. He nods for them to follow, and he parts the crowd easily as they walk onto the dance floor, staring straight at the crew of riders that have dared to step on the sacred Chlodwig ground.

Lachlan smiles at him. It's wicked, his blond hair hanging in his eyes, dark with sweat, and Adair has to remind himself that he can't afford to lose it. Not right now. Not while he's taking up the little brat's challenge.

He leads his crew in the first routine. He knows how he can play it, how he can make Lachlan lose his grip. He positions himself right against Dagan, leg to leg, groin to groin, and they sway to the rhythm as Ezra and Morgan step before them, back to back, mimicking the same position.

Lachlan's glare is heavy and heated on Adair's back. He grins to himself, and flips Dagan around, launching him up in the air and catching him on his shoulders. The thumping of their boots on the floor echoes in counterpoint with the bass. Their routine is rehearsed, for which he's thankful, because if he had to come up with something on his own right now, he'd probably simply grab Lachlan and bend him over in the middle of the club.

Because that would go down so well with his crew.

There's little to no contest. The roar of the crowd quickly declares them the winners against Lachlan's crew, everyone yelling and clapping and grabbing Riff by the tails of his shirt to get to their cash.

Adair nods at the broker and waves at his crew to get to their booth. When he looks back, he finds Lachlan looking at him amidst his companions, his dark coal eyes looking like black pits of *want*.

He's going to get a piece of that right *now*.

"Stay here," he tells them. "I gotta get some things straightened out."

Ezra smirks. "Thought we just did."

"And brilliantly."

Morgan nods. "They'll think twice before showing up here again."

Adair personally doesn't think so, not if he knows Lachlan in the slightest, but he lets his crew believe that. At least for the time being. "Where's Dagan?"

"God knows," Morgan sniggers. "He's already got lost somewhere. We should probably follow his example."

"Good. Collect the green before you go." Adair grasps Morgan's beer bottle and downs what's left in it in one gulp. "See you boys in the morning."

He walks off in the crowd, hoping against hope none of them will follow him. He doesn't need to deal with them on top of everything else. Actually the least, the *very* least thing he needed tonight was to have Lachlan drop by the club. And not just drop by, no. He had to fucking stand up and get into the Wars.

Adair's going to hand his ass right back to that cheeky little fuck.

Chapter Four

The wind outside is chilly on his sweaty skin. His senses are sharper, thanks to the moon approaching, and he knows Lachlan is still around. He doesn't know if the other minions Lachlan had around him are still in the area, but Lachlan definitely hasn't gone anywhere.

"Thought you'd never get out."

Adair turns around slowly, his eyes narrowing.

Lachlan's leaning back against his bike. His skin is gleaming with sweat, peeking through the folds of his leather jacket, hair pulled back in a ponytail, messy locks trailing down his back.

Adair's right in his personal space before Lachlan can utter another word. "What the fuck were you thinking?" Adair hisses, grabbing Lachlan's shoulders and nearly knocking the both of them to the ground.

"Thought you -- ah, liked the show," Lachlan gasps, grabbing hold of Adair's hair and tilting his face up. "Sure feels like it."

Adair growls and tightens his grip, his hands shifting to Lachlan's neck. Lachlan chokes slightly, and yanks on Adair's hair, his mouth parted in a silent O.

"Who the fuck do you think you are, challenging me like that?" Adair growls again, his fingers digging into the soft skin of Lachlan's throat. Lachlan groans and sinks his fingernails into the tendons at the back of Adair's neck, spreading his legs and jerking violently against Adair's body.

"If you can't beat them," Lachlan moans, his eyes half mast as he stares up at Adair. "Join them. Right?"

"You fool," Adair gritted out, his hands leaving Lachlan's neck to take hold of his hair. "You can't, and you don't want to join -- this. You have your life, your friends. What the fuck are you doing here?"

"You're here," Lachlan whispers, and it's the same quiet, honest voice that's been haunting Adair's sleep for so long. "That's enough."

They stare at each other for a moment, then Adair yanks Lachlan's head up and their mouths meet with a clashing of teeth and tongue. It feels like the first time, with Adair following Lachlan out of the Chlodwig and fucking him hard and fast against his bike, Lachlan's pretty mouth wrapped around his dick as he rode his face.

Christ, just thinking about it makes Adair want to do it all over again. "On your knees," he orders, forcing Lachlan down by the grip on his hair. Lachlan smirks up at him, licking his lips, and obediently leans forward to suck at Adair's denim-covered dick.

Adair shudders and sticks his fist between his teeth, biting his knuckles as Lachlan opens his mouth and sucks at where the head of Adair's dick is tenting his jeans.

"Get it out," Adair grunts, his other hand skimming Lachlan's cheek, his fingertips following the open curve of Lachlan's lips.

Lachlan looks up at him through heavy-lidded eyes. He uses his teeth to undo Adair's fly, a soft moan leaving his lips and tickling Adair's oversensitive skin. Lachlan parts his lips, letting the large head of Adair's rigid cock slide over his tongue.

Adair tightens his fingers in Lachlan's hair, guiding him, pushing Lachlan to take more, the insistent press of hard flesh against Lachlan's lips opening him up further. Lachlan tries to work against his gag reflex, Adair can feel it in his soft, gurgling noises, relaxing his jaw and taking as much as Adair will give him, saliva making his red lips shine in the dim light.

Adair cups his cheek to feel the shape of his own cock filling Lachlan's mouth, then he moves forward to trace the outline of his plump lips as his cock slides between

them. Adair places both his palms over Lachlan's cheeks, and forces him forward just as his hips snap up, thrusting almost the whole length of himself into Lachlan's mouth.

Lachlan gags, his eyes squeezed shut as the head of Adair's dick bumps at the back of his throat. His hands splay against Adair's hips, his thumbs following the groove of skin and bone, and Adair pulls back until only the head of his dick is keeping Lachlan's lips wide open, red and shining with spit and precome.

Adair stares at him for a split second before he slams his dick home into Lachlan's mouth again, losing himself in the tight, wet heat as he fucks him with quick, hard thrusts. Lachlan groans loudly, his fingers hooking in Adair's belt loops, eyelashes clumped with unshed tears. The mess of precome and saliva trails down Lachlan's chin and neck, and Lachlan's fingers dig into Adair's waist, urging him closer, as though he can't get enough of Adair's dick.

"So fucking cocky," Adair grunts as he pulls out with a wet, obscene pop, trails of spit linking the plum-shaped head of his cock to Lachlan's used lips. "Think you can get one over on me?" Adair smears the precome over his mouth, his fingers thrusting past Lachlan's lips, and Lachlan gasps at the sensation.

He fucks Lachlan's mouth with his fingers as he has done with his cock, then he slips them out again, twisting his damp hand in Lachlan's messed up hair and yanking him up and off the ground.

"Turn around," Adair growls, bending him over the bike. Lachlan shudders and spreads his legs in invitation, bracing himself against the leather seat. Adair rips his jeans off him, baring the beautifully shaped curve of his ass. He lets his fingers trail down Lachlan's spine and through the crack of his butt, his cock heavy with need.

Adair doesn't know how he can stand to spend weeks at a time without this. "You couldn't have waited, could you?" he whispers, voice low and rough, his hand slapping down hard on the muscled flesh of Lachlan's ass.

Lachlan grunts, shuddering, thrusting back against Adair's palm, seeking friction. "Looks like you can't either," Lachlan moans, his forehead thudding against his crossed arms as Adair smacks his hand down again.

"Shut up," Adair growls, his hand falling down, hard, leaving Lachlan whimpering and kicking back against him.

"Just fuck me," Lachlan growls, impatiently bucking back against Adair, his legs shaking with the strain, jeans in a messy pool around his knees. "Now, for fuck's sake, Adair, enough -- ahh," Lachlan groans and shudders, Adair's slap on his ass making his whole body quiver with the impact.

"I will," Adair whispers, low and dirty in his ear. "When I say so."

"Tease," Lachlan mutters, grinning shakily at him, cheek pressed flush against the seat of the bike.

Adair bites down on the juncture of Lachlan's neck and shoulder, wanting to leave a mark, something that Lachlan can touch and remember. Something that will tell everyone who Lachlan belongs to.

Lachlan moans and bucks under the drape of Adair's body, twisting his head back to give him more access, and he keens loudly the moment Adair's calloused fingertips slide down the curve of his ass, probing between his butt cheeks.

"Fuck," Lachlan groans and fights to spread his legs wider. "Come on, come on, Adair, please, just fuck me, please, just do it --"

Adair yanks him up by his hair, two dry fingers pushing in to the knuckle in the scorching, overwhelming heat of Lachlan's tight body. Adair squeezes his eyes shut, teeth sinking in his lower lip to try and keep himself in check as Lachlan writhes and moans, firmly impaled on his hand, Lachlan's fingers scrabbling at the bike's seat for leverage.

"Maybe you'll think twice before taunting me again," Adair warns, his lips up close to Lachlan's ear.

"Or maybe," Lachlan whispers softly, "I'll do it again just for the retribution."

Adair's not smiling at that. Really, he's not. He totally isn't.

He withdraws his fingers and pushes Lachlan face-first down on the bike, Lachlan's beautiful, reddened ass sticking out toward Adair like the most sinful promise ever witnessed. He uses his other hand to spread Lachlan's ass cheeks apart,

putting Lachlan's dark, clenching hole on display. He can't fucking wait to be buried deep inside of him, fuck the cheek right out of Lachlan until there's nothing but soft, pliant limbs and helpless moans.

Adair lines himself up and rocks his hips, the thick, wet head of his dick pressing at the guardian ring of muscle until it gives way. Lachlan's whole body shakes wildly before going limp against the motorbike.

Adair twists his fingers in Lachlan's hair and fastens a hand on Lachlan's waist, bringing him up and forcing him back on each thrust, the hot, slick channel sucking him in like a vise as Adair starts to pull out. Lachlan grunts and rocks back against him in impatience, his legs as wide as his jeans will allow, the pale moonlight making his skin shine like a diamond.

"Move," Lachlan begs, his voice fraught and shaky like shards of glass. "Adair, please, move, please, please, need it! Adair --"

Adair complies, Lachlan's voice shooting through his veins like electricity. He keeps up a slow, purposefully hard rhythm, plunging back in balls deep before drawing out completely, not letting Lachlan adjust to the feeling of emptiness before ramming in once more.

Lachlan moans like a cat in heat, his skin hot and flushed, almost burning to the touch, and Adair slams forward again, his balls smacking Lachlan's ass. He pulls him back with every thrust, hard and unyielding, and Lachlan's voice gets more and more wrecked with every single thrust.

Adair breathes hard, pleasure sizzling through his veins at every breathy gasp he gets out of Lachlan's lips. He's not going to last much longer, but he's determined to take Lachlan with him when he comes.

He reaches around, pulling Lachlan back on his dick and wrapping his fingers around the stiff length of Lachlan's cock. Lachlan cries out, tossing his head back against Adair's shoulders as his hips twitch helplessly, not knowing if he should fuck up in Adair's fist or back on his cock.

It's messy and filthy and graceless, but Lachlan moans continuously, his back arched in a bow as he comes with Adair's name on his lips, hard and fast and all over Adair's hand and the bike. The tight, convulsive clenching of Lachlan's body as the orgasm ripples through him is all Adair needs to tumble over the edge, shooting his load inside Lachlan's ass, thick white ropes that slide down his thighs and onto the dry grass under their feet.

Lachlan goes limp underneath him, his body trembling with the aftershocks of his release. Adair holds him up, his arms wound tight around his waist, damp-hot pants blowing against the crook of Lachlan's neck.

Lachlan nudges at Adair's chin, his head tilting back to press a kiss at the corner of Adair's mouth. Adair rubs his sticky wet fingers in the taut muscles of Lachlan's abs, his heartbeat in sync with Lachlan's ragged breath.

"Whoa," Lachlan whispers finally, his hands covering Adair's above his belly.

Adair fights to keep a straight face, but it's close to impossible when he's softening inside of Lachlan, joined in one being, their come trailing over their skin like war paint. He smiles, leans over slightly and kisses the back of Lachlan's neck.

"Brat," Adair whispers affectionately. He waits for a minute, just feeling, before pulling out and tucking himself back in.

Lachlan groans and pulls up his pants, trying to wipe off the drying come from his leather seat. "Christ, that's gonna stick forever." He glares at Adair, who just chuckles.

"You have to go." He hopes he sounds as definite as he wants to. "Get back to your... friends, whatever."

Lachlan turns around and looks at the sky, his eyes squinted. "Full moon ain't till tomorrow." He turns to look at Adair with that shit-eating grin of his. "Think you can stomach me around for a few more hours?"

Adair grunts. He wants to look like he's thinking about it, but in the end he just shakes his head and grabs Lachlan by the back of his neck, pulling him into a rough kiss. "Deal."

* * *

Lachlan can't believe it. He had hoped, true, he'd prayed even that things would go the way they played in his mind, but truth was, they rarely (if ever) did.

Not only have they managed to make it onto the dance floor and back out without getting their asses handed back to them (not by Adair's crew -- but that was totally part of the plan). They also managed to win over two different crews, and Adair hasn't killed him. He's fucked him hard enough for Lachlan to still feel him pulsing inside, but that's hardly a complaint.

He leaves his bike, once again cunningly disguised, propped up against the wall of Adair's cabin, and they both stumble through the door, already attacking one another's mouths, nimble fingers undoing belts, tearing clothes apart.

Lachlan doesn't know if he's ready for round two, but he'll sure as hell try. He kicks the door closed just as Adair's hands sneak around him and mold across his butt cheeks, splaying them apart through Lachlan's jeans.

"Fuck," Lachlan groans and tries to keep his balance as they knock into the sparse furniture, stepping on each other's feet before they finally hit the messy bed. "Fuck," Lachlan groans again as the edge of pleasure blurs with pain, Adair's fingertips squeezing the raw skin of his ass through the harsh material of his jeans.

Adair grunts and flips them around on the bed, Lachlan on top of him. Their kisses turn sloppy, agitated, the hard ridge of Adair's cock pressing insistently on the groove of Lachlan's thigh. Lachlan's head is spinning, wild, delirious even, and he kicks his legs apart on the mattress, rolling his hips down on Adair's groin.

Adair arches up against him, his hands grabbing Lachlan's biceps as he pulls him down across his chest. Lachlan's knees dig into the mattress, tight on Adair's sides, his fingers clutching at Adair's chest, trying to pry open his jacket and shirt.

"Want," Lachlan moans as he's finally met with bare skin. "Naked. Now."

Adair complies, which in itself is enough to shock Lachlan. He usually drives Lachlan insane with teasing, drawing it out, never giving in to Lachlan's demands, but this time he simply sheds his clothes, roughly pulling Lachlan's jeans off him as he does

so. Adair's mouth fastens on the hollow of Lachlan's throat, biting, sucking, teeth pulling at the tender skin, Adair's hands sliding down Lachlan's back and spreading his ass cheeks apart as he grinds Lachlan down on his cock.

"Now," Adair growls, the head of his dick sliding through Lachlan's crack, and Lachlan moans, a shudder raking through his body at the pressure against his oversensitive hole.

He's still open and wet, Adair's handprints red and raised on his skin. Adair thrusts forward, the stretch and burn taking Lachlan's breath away, broken whimpers leaving his lips as he fights to accommodate Adair's girth.

"So fucking hot, dear Christ, the way you moved, Lachlan, for fuck's sake, drove me insane just watching you. I hated all those hands on you."

Lachlan writhes, minute rolls of his hips as he tries to take more of Adair into his hole. It burns, deliciously so, his body too fucked out to put up any resistance. Adair slides right in, where he belongs, and Lachlan keens softly, his mouth nimbly searching for Adair's, catching over the stubble of his chin and the curve of his lower lip before he manages to plunge his tongue past the barrier of Adair's teeth.

It's hot and messy, Lachlan's hips stuttering in counterpoint with Adair's. Adair's hands keep Lachlan's ass spread wide, every roll of his hips driving his dick in to brush against Lachlan's prostate. Lachlan moans, tossing his head back, neck arched in a perfect bow as he uses Adair's chest as leverage to rut back against his thrusts.

"So fucking beautiful," Adair grunts, pulling Lachlan down in a particularly hard shove. "Drives me insane. Everyone else looking. They better fucking know who you belong to."

Lachlan nods, his voice too wrecked for proper speech, his dick diamond hard against his belly. He wants to come just like this, with Adair fucking him past the point of coherency, not a hand on his dick, all of his surroundings blurred out in a whirring cloud of white noise.

Thick white semen splatters on their bellies. Lachlan's body is shaking, quivering with the effort to keep his balance as his orgasm rushes through him. He's too wrung

out, too fucked out to protest when Adair rolls them over, grabbing Lachlan's ankles and spreading his legs wide and apart before driving back into him.

Lachlan clumsily reaches up to tangle his hands in Adair's hair. He needs to feel him, see him. He hates himself for forcing Adair's hand, but God, the end does justify the means indeed.

Adair hooks Lachlan's legs in the crooks of his elbows, his hands framing Lachlan's hips as he drives into him, again and again, the change in angle letting him hit Lachlan's prostate with every thrust. Soon Lachlan's growing hard again, almost painfully so, his eyes filled with tears at the onslaught of sensation.

"Adair," he begs, voice quiet, awed. "Adair, please..."

"I gotcha," Adair whispers, too soft, too involved, and Lachlan barely dares to hope. "I gotcha."

Adair palms Lachlan's dick, without any finesse, but it's enough for the third orgasm of the night to whiten out Lachlan's world. He shudders and bucks underneath Adair, pulling at his hair, his mouth breathing against Adair rather than kissing. He feels Adair's hips stutter in a staccato rhythm, losing pace, and tries to clench down as hard as he can, Adair's release hitting Lachlan's depths like a freight train.

He doesn't know how long he stays like that, passed out and used, but when he next opens his eyes, Lachlan finds Adair propped up on his elbow, looking at him through his wolf-like eyes.

"Welcome back," Adair rasps, his voice almost unrecognizable.

Lachlan can't even stir. He realizes that at some point Adair must have cleaned them up, because they are lying on Adair's soiled sheets, their clothes in a neat, if uneven, pile by the chest of drawers.

"Ngh," is all Lachlan can muster, and his eyes flutter shut, body curling up into Adair's side as he stifles a yawn. "Tired."

He thinks Adair has said something, but the hand in his hair is too hypnotic, too soothing, and Lachlan is pulled under before he can ask Adair to repeat himself.

Chapter Five

Adair is still sleeping when Lachlan wakes. The transformation has left him drained. By now the wolf is used to Lachlan's presence, but still wild, still mistrusting toward anything human. Lachlan has his fair share of scarring, leftovers of the wolf's enthusiasm when it had recognized its mate, but he doesn't really care. Quite the contrary, he cherishes every Moon as something untouchable, something pure that only he and Adair can share.

The memory of Cedric's hands on Adair is still too fresh in Lachlan's mind for him to object to such trivial things as superficial scratches. He knows what he's in for, and that's all he cares about.

He pushes back the sheets and rolls out, wincing in pain, and he wobbles over to the chest to pick up his clothes. They smell like sex and sweat, and for a split second he's tempted to just forgo them and slip on a pair of Adair's jeans, just to feel him a little closer.

Lachlan turns around to glance at Adair. They've spent two days holed up in the cabin together, and it's time for Lachlan to go back to his friends -- his crew -- and figure out their plans for the night.

Adair tells Lachlan to go back. He doesn't know -- has no idea -- that Lachlan's planning to go back indeed, but not where Adair wants him to.

Lachlan hastily dons his clothes and walks to the bed, bowing his head to press a quiet kiss at the curve of Adair's cheekbone. "I will see you soon," he promises, his heart yearning to just say fuck the world and slip back in between the sheets with him.

Adair mumbles something in his sleep, one silver eye barely opening to acknowledge Lachlan's departure before he turns over, burrowing deep in the bedding. Lachlan sighs and shakes his head, smiling softly to himself.

He doesn't start the bike until he's well out of the hearing range of Adair's cabin and close enough to the main road. He doesn't think he could have resisted if Adair wakes up and decides he doesn't want to let Lachlan go. Lachlan speeds away from Washington, back toward Baltimore, as they had decided earlier with Thorn and Keith. They would go back every time, wait a day, lull Adair and his crew into a false sense of confidence before going back.

Lachlan's not stupid. He knew they wouldn't be able to win against Adair's crew during the first round. Nor the second, for that matter. They needed more, they needed practice, and the only practice they can get is at the Chlodwig. He grins to himself and revs his engine, speeding down the wretched road toward their meeting point.

The ball's rolling, and now there's little anyone can do to stop it. Not him, not the scavengers, and most definitely not Adair.

* * *

"They thought they could get away with it," Morgan rumbles, playing with his knife on the top of the wooden table.

"Looks like they did get away with it," Ezra says, sarcasm dripping from every syllable.

"We still won," Morgan argues, pointing his knife toward Ezra as though to underline a point. "And they ran off pretty quickly after that."

"Adair's gonna be pissed today," Dagan finally says, fishing out a hipflask and taking a slow, long draught. "What with the full moon and those fuckers showing up..."

"They won't," Morgan assures him. "Not after getting their asses kicked royally."

"They weren't exactly booed off, though," Dagan mutters. He cringes as both Morgan and Ezra turn to glare at him. "It's true," he insists. "They weren't. They were winning."

"They're fucking amateurs who need to be reminded of their place!"

"Did I say anything to the contrary?" Dagan snaps, color high in his cheeks. "I'm just saying, they were prepared. They know how things run at the Chlodwig. Something's up and I don't want to be in their shoes when Adair finds out."

"Finds out what?"

The three of them freeze as Adair walks up to them, hands deep in his pockets and a very sour look on his face.

Silence.

It would be funny, given the fact that Adair's been listening in on their conversation for the past ten minutes and none of them had noticed, but he manages to keep a straight face as he glares at them.

"Nothing," Morgan says finally. "Nothing, just --"

"We were discussing last night," Ezra admits, stepping back to let Adair slide in the booth, his back against the wall and feet propped up on the table.

"What happened last night?"

"Not last night, uh, we mean those... riders, crashing the Wars."

Adair nods. "They're taken care of."

There's a beat of silence. "Are they?" Dagan asks, looking uneasy.

Adair snorts. "I didn't kill anyone if that's what you're implying."

"Oh. No, of course not," Dagan chuckles, but Adair can't help noticing how his shoulders relax with the laugh. "Um, so..." Dagan looks helplessly around, trying to shake the awkward moment off his shoulders.

"They weren't around last night," Ezra tells Adair, steering the conversation off the murky waters Dagan has sunk it in. "We figured the one ass-kicking we handed out was enough."

"Probably," Adair says with a dark nod. "We better stay on the lookout though. We don't know what their end game is, we don't know why they came here. We don't know anything, and we need to be prepared."

"For them to come back?"

"For anything at all. We can't afford to lose, not against them or against anyone else, for that matter."

Ezra nods, rather enthusiastically, and Morgan looks visibly more relaxed. Adair stands, stretching a little as he looks hard at all of them. "Get up. We're off."

They all do, scraping their chairs and benches on the uneven floor of the pub. "Where to?"

"Practice."

* * *

Lachlan has given very strict orders to the guys. Lay low for a few days, work normally. Rae has a run to take care of, so does Thorn. Lachlan stays shut up in Eric's garage, thinking of new routines they could rehearse before going back to Washington, and trying to ignore Eric's constant drilling.

"We were lucky this time. Why do you need to keep digging?"

Lachlan sighs and stops mid-turn. "Eric, please."

"Please what? Look, we went there, we danced, and by the way, I still have no idea what a full spin is, no matter how many times Rae tried to show me --"

"It's a full turn of your body in a counterclockwise --"

"Whatever! The point is, we lost against them, and we're going to lose every time, and your lover is definitely not going to be pleased the moment he realizes this wasn't just a one-time stunt. I'd rather not have to deal with your relationship's fallout while stuck in the scavengers' headquarters!"

"Sissy."

Eric throws his hands up in the air and grunts, going back to work on Keith's bike. "Why don't you go the more normal way and try to talk it out? You know him better than anyone else."

"He won't leave," Lachlan says, very seriously. "Don't you think I've tried? Many times, before deciding to hell with this?"

Eric gives him a look of deep mistrust. "Why is it that I don't believe you tried *that* hard?"

Lachlan sighs in frustration. "It's not easy. I did try, but with him it's like a lottery spin. You deal with the numbers you get at the moment, and be happy you got some."

"And you never got the right numbers to tell him you want him to quit and ride off into the sunset on your bike?"

"The sass doesn't help."

Eric puts down his tools and straightens up, wiping his hands on a cloth and giving Lachlan a look that is halfway between shrewd and compassionate. "I know. And I'm trying. Which is why I am -- we all are, really -- risking our asses for you and him to have your happy ending. But you gotta realize that your brilliant plan has holes bigger than a slice of Swiss cheese."

Lachlan shrugs. "It's just a little bit of adventure, that's all."

"A *bit of adventure* is to ride from Baltimore to Kamloops. A *bit of adventure* is braving Florida in the summer. Going to challenge a bunch of bloodthirsty thieves in their own playground without knowing whether the outcome will be even remotely what you hope it to be its not adventure, it's --"

"Suicidal," Lachlan finishes with an eye roll. "Can't you find anything more creative?"

Eric shakes his head. "You're not alone in this, Lachlan. You have to consider that, too."

"I know." Lachlan turns his back on Eric, staring at a point far off to the horizon that only he can see. "I'm gambling all I got here, man. If I lose, I lose it all. But if I win..." He trails off, not really knowing what to do, the sudden tightening of his throat robbing him of speech.

The winner takes it all. Lachlan knows the rules, and he knows he's playing with fire. If the burn is going to be worth it in the end, he has no idea. "When will Thorn get back?"

"Sometime tonight, or so he said. If nothing happens."

Lachlan nods. Adair and his crew are not the only scavengers out there. He grits his teeth and taps the floor with his heel, drawing a triangle on the ground with his movements. "Good."

Eric gets back to work, muttering to himself. Lachlan shakes the hair out of his eyes and sets himself back in position, trying to figure out a dance routine that will give his crew a chance against Adair's.

* * *

Thorn gets back early the next day, Keith some time later. They meet up at Eric's garage, going over moves with Lachlan, improvising whenever they feel like it, using their different body strengths to get the best out of each other. Lachlan is good at leading them, providing new schemes and choreographies, but he's not on his own in this.

Each of them has talent, a natural fluidity that translates to dance far better than Lachlan could have expected. Rae and Keith read each other like a book, and despite Thorn's veiled protests, Lachlan pairs them up in the routine.

The results are immediate. The spinning grows faster, more daring. Thorn is strong enough to launch Eric in the air, and Eric's got good enough reflexes to prop himself up on his hands rather than landing straight on his ass. Lachlan laughs and claps, then slides back in their midst as they rehearse the dance as whole.

"You think we're gonna win?" Keith asks with a bright grin, giving Lachlan the courtesy of speaking out loud.

"I don't know," Lachlan admits, taking a long swig of beer. "I wish I did."

"Adair, that's his name, yes?"

Lachlan hesitates. "Why?"

"Just curiosity," Keith beams, but Lachlan hasn't forgotten the two hellish weeks spent holed up in a cabin, submerged by snow and with Keith's advances bouncing off the walls. Keith seems to remember as well, because he laughs and slaps Lachlan across the back with a shake of his head. "Man, no need to be defensive. I just wish he'd see

what's standing right in front of him rather than have you go through this complicated scheme to get your man."

Lachlan relaxes a little. "It's... very complicated."

"It always is, isn't it?" Keith grins, picking up a beer from the makeshift cooler by Lachlan's feet. "How did he take it?"

He didn't, really. It was me doing the taking, Lachlan thinks, then curses himself when Keith sniggers. Fucking psychics.

"I see," Keith says with a sly grin. He takes another gulp of beer and pats Lachlan's back affectionately. "Don't worry, kid. We're on your side."

Lachlan takes a long breath and nods, running his hands through his hair. "Do you guys want to rehearse once more?" he asks them at large, walking to the middle of the room. They all agree that the more practice they get, the better -- ironically enough, something Adair would approve of -- and they start their routine from scratch.

It's Dance Wars night at the Chlodwig, and Lachlan wants to win.

Chapter Six

The Wars are in full swing at the Chlodwig when Adair leads his crew to the floor. It's an easy night, something they can write off before midnight no problem, only a few regulars who manage to win their way up to challenge Adair's crew, but they all crash and burn after merely two routines.

Adrenaline flows freely in Adair's veins, more powerful than any kind of booze. For all that he hates the Chlodwig, just like everyone else who has made a living out of scraps, there's very little he can compare to the gritty, twisted, powerful feeling of victory the Wars have left him with.

Just as the last contestants leave the floor, their feathers properly ruffled, Adair hears a gasp coming from either Morgan or Ezra, he's not sure. He turns around, frowning at the disturbance, and his heart jumps right up in his throat when he's met with the cocky smile and dark coal eyes he knows so well, staring at him from across the room.

"What the flying fuck!" Ezra explodes, stepping before Adair, fists balled at his sides. "Who the fuck do they think they are, huh?"

Adair shakes his head, trying to clear it from the fumes of alcohol, lust and rage that have clouded it from the moment he saw Lachlan. It's impossible. He told him to go away. He *told* him to go back to Baltimore.

What the fuck is Lachlan playing at? Get himself killed? Again?

With a growl, Adair steps before Ezra, his eyes gleaming in anger as he turns to stare at his crew members. "In position. Now."

Everyone obeys. Lachlan leads his men to the middle of the floor, shrugs off his jacket and tosses it to the side, his naked chest gleaming under the smoky lights. Adair's

eyes narrow as he watches another rider, with a stupid-ass Mohawk, step in behind Lachlan, his arm wrapping around Lachlan's waist.

Mine. He wants to stride to the middle of the floor and yank those filthy hands off his mate, but he doesn't, he bites his tongue hard enough to taste blood and keeps his stance, arms crossed above his chest as he waits for Riff to finish his round and take all the bets.

Lachlan nods, once, and they begin to move.

Adair stares as foreign hands, unknown hands, slide down Lachlan's body as the music picks up pace. He can feel the wolf in him raise its head, growling its anger at the mere thought that someone would dare approach his mate, let alone *touch* him. Lachlan moves with all the consummate grace he uses in bed, hips rolling to the rhythm, his ass pressed up against that fucker's groin, bowing backwards in a slow, sensual arch.

Adair doesn't even know or care what everyone else is doing. He burns holes in the back of Lachlan's head, possessiveness only fuelling his anger. He can idly feel the crowd's cheering, and Ezra, Morgan and Dagan grumbling and threatening behind him, but for all he cares they might have been ants squabbling over a crumb.

That motherfucker needs to get his hands off Lachlan, and needs to do it *now*.

Lachlan turns around and smirks, as though he knows perfectly well what he's doing to Adair, and ends his routine in between all four of them, each of the riders taking hold of some part of Lachlan to hoist him up on their arms. Adair can barely contain his growl, and he furiously motions for his crew to step up to the game.

So that's how Lachlan wants to play. Fine. *Let's see if he likes his own medicine.*

Adair walks in front of his crew just as Lachlan and his men step back. He stops, turns around, and twists his body backwards, until he can touch the ground beneath his head with his palms. Dagan gets the message and steps up between Adair's legs, doing the same, only leaning forward, his hips slowly grinding down on Adair's.

The crowd goes wild as they slowly start to rise, Morgan and Ezra mimicking their every move. Adair spins Dagan around, his arms shooting out in a cross as he kicks his legs apart, letting Dagan lean back against him, grabbing Adair's hands as

leverage before launching himself off the ground, only Adair's fierce grip on his hands keeping him upright. Morgan does the same, then scissors his legs open, twisting around and going to sit on Ezra's shoulder, ankles linked around his chest as he slowly descends, a sexual, primitive crawl, until both he and Dagan are standing before their partners.

Adair grins. He looks straight past Dagan and into Lachlan's eyes, and lets his hands trail down Dagan's back, skimming past the curve of his ass and grabbing hold of his thighs. Dagan's legs shoot up in the air and wrap around Adair's back, just as Adair swings him around in a wild spin before tossing him up in the air, and catching him on his shoulder, his face buried in Dagan's groin.

The Chlodwig's patrons cheer, clap and whistle like one man, declaring Midnight's crew the winners once more. Adair turns in time to see the dark scowl on Lachlan's face, and for a split second he forgets that he's mad, and just wants to cross the room, bend Lachlan over and fuck him in front of everyone, just because he can.

But he can't. Not at the Chlodwig, and surely not in front of his crew, who are already whispering about giving the riders a lesson once and for all.

Adair remembers he's mad. Very, very mad.

For the love of *fuck*, when *will* Lachlan listen?

"Ezra," he calls over the roar of the crowd. "Collect the winnings. You two can keep him company and drink or fuck yourselves stupid."

"No way, man. We gotta get the assholes first." Morgan says, a dark twinkle in his eye.

Adair tries to work his best 'don't fuck with me' voice, and glares down at Morgan with a fierce frown. "Morgan. I said get lost."

Morgan pales, but he stubbornly presses on. "You also said they were taken care of."

Adair curses. Motherfucking Lachlan. Of course he did, because he thought Lachlan would have known better than this. He's going to kill the sonofabitch. "Apparently, my message wasn't strong enough. You stay here. All of you," he adds,

looking menacingly at each of them in turn. "Drink. Party. Whatever. Meet with me tomorrow here at the same time."

"But --"

"No buts." Adair waits until all of them give in and nod, too preoccupied with counting the green to mind Adair's weaker than weak excuses, and bolts from the pub, racing up the rickety staircase into the deserted main area.

He doesn't bother with the front door. He makes a beeline for the exit behind the bar, and finds himself in the back yard of the Chlodwig, amidst old, rotten cars and trucks, and one cocky fucker. "What the fuck do you think you're doing?"

"I was going to ask you the same thing." Lachlan's voice is as smooth as honey, but darker than whiskey as he stares at Adair, only a denim jacket thrown over his bare chest, sweat making his long blonde hair curl at the back of his neck. He looks downright sinful.

Adair steps up, covering the ground that separates them in two quick strides, his breath damp against Lachlan's slightly parted mouth. "Do you think this is a fucking game?"

"What makes you think that's what I take this as?" Lachlan says through gritted teeth.

"The mere fact that you showed up again even though you perfectly know well that you *can't* win is enough," Adair growls. "What are you trying to do? What the hell are you trying to prove?"

"No games," Lachlan replies quietly. "I'm just competing, Adair. Like you and your crew."

"Why?" Adair explodes, grabbing Lachlan's wrists. "Why do you need to come here, for cryin' out loud? Why do you need to expose yourself like that? To prove that you can do anything I can do?"

"You're way, way off the mark," Lachlan replies, curling his fingers around Adair's, trying to wrestle for power. "I can't tell you if you don't figure it out on your

own, but I'm not going to stop. We're not going to step back from the Wars just because you're afraid of the competition."

Adair narrows his eyes, his upper lip curling in a sardonic smile. "Watch who's afraid."

He surges forward, biting, sucking at Lachlan's mouth as he backs him up against the hood of an unknown truck. Adair has no idea who it belongs to, but the thrill of the risk just adds to his arousal, and he's quick to pull open the driver's door and shove Lachlan right into it, climbing on top of him.

"Do you think I don't know what this is all about?" Adair grits out, biting into Lachlan's collarbone, pushing the jacket off his shoulders and twisting it behind his back, trapping his arms with it. "You fucking tease. Think I don't know why you are doing this?"

Lachlan grunts and lets out a startled gasp when Adair's mouth attacks one of his nipples, teeth pulling at the tender nub until it pulses, hard and red and sore. Adair spreads Lachlan's thighs across the seat, unceremoniously ripping down Lachlan's jeans, and hoisting one of his legs above the edge of the dashboard.

"Don't -- ah -- flatter yourself," Lachlan moans, his arms twisting in their denim restraints.

The truck squeaks as Adair mounts up between Lachlan's legs, his lips leaving one nipple to give the other one equal attention. Lachlan whines and throws his head back, sweat dripping down his forehead to the hollow of his neck, salty and bittersweet. His mouth opens around another breathy moan as Adair licks a swathe down his chest, toward his navel and the leaking head of Lachlan's rapidly hardening dick.

"Don't fucking cross me, Lachlan," Adair growls, biting down on Lachlan's hips as he shifts lower on the upholstery. "You won't like me if you do."

Lachlan has the strength to smirk at him, and Adair loses it. His powerful hands, roughened by his harsh life, mold over Lachlan's trembling muscles, pushing his legs further up and letting his knees fit behind the curve of Lachlan's thighs.

Before Lachlan can say a word, he's got his tongue down Lachlan's throat, demanding and raw, his fingers bruise-tight around Lachlan's ankles. His other hand flits up the crease of Lachlan's ass, finding his tight, full balls and cupping them in his palm. He squeezes once, growling deep in his throat as Lachlan whimpers, the vibrations tingling on his lips.

Lachlan bucks desperately underneath him. Adair breaks the kiss and licks a wet stripe down Lachlan's arm, slowly moving down his body, Adair's thumb stroking the curve of Lachlan's foot, enjoying every tiny whimper that his little torture brought out of Lachlan's lips.

"Adair, ngh -- oh, oh fuck --" Lachlan's whole body shakes violently and he twists helplessly in his restraints when Adair pulls his balls tight up against his body, Lachlan's dick spurting bout after bout of precome with every squeeze-pull-squeeze.

Adair smiles darkly and sinks his teeth in Lachlan's bicep. He wants to leave his mark, imprint his possession everywhere on Lachlan's body, so that every time he stripped everyone would see. And everyone would think twice before laying their hands anywhere on Lachlan.

"Adair," Lachlan begs again, writhing on the leather seats. "Adair, please --"

Adair grunts and settles back on his knees, lining himself up before Lachlan's clenching hole. He doesn't bother with fingers, too worked up, too frenzied to waste any more time on foreplay. He pushes in, Lachlan's hole stretching obscenely wide around his dick, and Lachlan mewls, head tossing back on the seat, his thighs quivering with the strain of keeping them up and wide.

Lachlan's breath hitches, his eyes half-mast and heavy lidded as he stares up at Adair, mouth bruised, slick with spit. Adair groans, rocks his hips slightly, seating himself deeper in Lachlan's tight, scorching heat. Everything else fades, and he keeps Lachlan pinned down on the seat as he starts to pull out, the pace slow, purposeful and hard, avoiding Lachlan's prostate but making sure to go as deep as he can with every roll of his hips.

Lachlan moans, his voice rough like whiskey on gravel, and he tries to push back, his cock bouncing on his belly, weeping and neglected. Adair bows, slowly bringing his mouth level with Lachlan's ear, spilling filth and curses as he grunts and fucks.

Adair pushes Lachlan's other leg up against the back of the seat, Lachlan's hole stretched almost impossibly wide around the thick girth of him. The change in angle has Adair finally slam against Lachlan's prostate as he slides in balls deep, and Lachlan lets go of a startled cry, his whole body going rigid as pleasure sparks deep in his gut.

"More," he moans, bucking wantonly in the restricted space, his hair sticking against the black leather of the seat like shards of gold, the smack of skin on skin adding to their desperate breaths and the creaking of the old truck.

Adair rams his hips home again and again, pressing Lachlan down in the cushions of the seat with every thrust. He keeps up a pace that gets Lachlan to the point of incoherency, breathless curses and moans and Adair's name the only sound he manages to make.

"Come on," Adair urges him, "not so sassy anymore with your ass stuffed full, are you?"

Lachlan garbles out a sound that could be anything. Adair picks him up, their foreheads banging together and against the roof of the truck cabin, forcing Lachlan to sit all the way down on Adair's cock, Lachlan's ass stretched wide and fucked deep. Lachlan's knees slip against the sweaty leather as Adair bounces him on his balls, until he can feel Lachlan's body tightening convulsively around him, ripples of his orgasm shaking him to the core.

Adair forces his eyes open, staring into Lachlan's beautiful face as pleasure swims over him, Lachlan's orgasm bringing Adair closer and closer to completion himself. He comes with a smothered cry, Lachlan's body shaking against him, their mouths crashing together as Adair's hips stutter once, twice, three times before his orgasm hits, blanking out everything else.

They both slump against the dashboard, panting and gasping for breath. Lachlan is almost passed out, and even though Adair had planned to leave him there, he can't bring himself to do so. Especially not in some stranger's truck.

Adair quietly tucks himself back in and pulls Lachlan into his arms. He tries to tell himself that he's only doing so because he wants to straighten out some things that cannot be solved with sex, thoroughly ignoring his skipping heartbeats as Lachlan's head lolls peacefully in the crook of Adair's neck.

Adair presses a furtive kiss over the bridge of Lachlan's nose before tearing off into the forest, toward the safety of his cabin.

* * *

Lachlan wakes up the moment he registers the change in position, but pretends he's still out for the count. He doesn't want to leave the closeness of Adair's body, not so soon anyway. Waking up would mean questions, questions Lachlan knows he can't answer honestly -- not yet. And the logical follow up will be lies, and then a fight.

Lachlan doesn't want to fight. That's not what this is about.

He carefully pries one eye open, and hides his smile in the pillow at the sight he's met with. Adair's hair is hanging loose on his face, his lips parted slightly around his puffy breaths, the seam of the pillow etched into his cheek. He looks way younger, almost child-like, and Lachlan feels the warm spark of affection spread from his stomach to every part of his body, immediately followed by a gut-clenching sense of foreboding.

He swears he can hear Eric's voice whispering to him in the back of his head.

Why don't you go the more normal way and try to talk it out?

Lachlan shakes his head, trying to clear it, trying to find in himself the reasoning he's using for everyone. Trouble is, when he's lying beside Adair, he just wishes things were easier, that he didn't have to lie, that he didn't have to go to the lengths he's going to.

Lachlan sinks into the covers, dragging his hands across his face. He should leave, way before Adair wakes up, but at the same time dragging himself out of bed has never been quite as difficult as it is now.

If he leaves, then he can postpone the inevitable... he can avoid talking to Adair, he can avoid explaining. He can wait until the next War. Then he'll face Adair, and all the consequences for his actions.

Somehow, the thought doesn't really settle the snakes twisting around in his gut. He closes his eyes, breathing deeply, pretending to sleep. Sometimes it helps. He doesn't think it's going to work this time, but he can still give it a shot.

* * *

It appears to have worked though, because when he next opens his eyes, Adair's awake, his bright silver eyes staring right at him. "Hey," Lachlan murmurs, stirring lightly. "Sorry. I overslept."

"That's all right," Adair whispers.

He doesn't add anything else, and Lachlan knows he's probably preparing for something he has to say. He slowly rolls over, propping himself up on his elbow, his hair falling into his eyes as he does so. "Out with it."

Adair snorts. "Why do you think I have anything to say?"

"You're measuring your words," Lachlan whispers, gesturing idly in mid-air. "So come on, spit it out."

Adair sighs, shaking his head and sitting up straight in bed. "I want to know what's going on in that head of yours," Adair says quietly.

"I was asleep till a minute ago, Adair," he says, trying to play dumb. "There's not a whole lot going on."

Adair rolls his eyes at him. "Very funny."

Lachlan chuckles. "It's true."

"What is it that you're trying to do, Lach?" Adair says, his voice soft like a caress. "And why?"

Lachlan straightens up slightly. "I'm not trying to prove anything," he begins, catching Adair's gaze and holding it. "I promise."

"But?"

Lachlan keeps looking at him. "There's no buts. I told you. Can't beat them --"

"You can't." Adair's voice is strong, cutting. "I told you before. You have your life. You have your runs, you have your job --"

"I quit," Lachlan admits, finally lowering his gaze. He doesn't think he can stomach watching Adair's reaction to that.

There's a moment of silence that stretches on for what feels like forever. Lachlan finally lifts his face up, and is met with the stony, blank wall of Adair's stare.

"You quit," he repeats, toneless.

Lachlan nods. He suddenly feels a thrill of fear, as though the snakes that had been dining in his stomach had sprinted all the way up to his throat, searing it tight.

"And you decided to make your living here?"

Lachlan shakes his head. "It's not like that."

"So it's not challenging me, it's not trying to make a living, what is it, Lachlan? What?" Adair stands up, kicking back the sheets. "What? *What?* Fucking explain it to me, Lachlan, because I don't have a fucking clue."

Lachlan pulls himself up to a sitting position, not wanting to come closer to Adair in case he explodes. He's already done that once, and that hurt like a motherfucker. He doesn't want it to happen ever again, but it looks like it's speeding downhill in fast forward, and he can't do anything to stop it.

"I can't... Adair. Please," Lachlan whispers, leaning across the bed. "Adair. Look at me."

Adair turns back around, his jaw set in a tight lock. He's waiting, but Lachlan's brain can't come up with a suitable lie.

"I want to be with you," Lachlan admits, his honesty the only card he's got left to play. "And this is the only way you'll ever let me."

Adair says nothing, again. Lachlan swallows and goes on. "I can't ask you to give up. I know this... whatever we have going on, it's not ideal, and I'm not asking you to do anything. At all. But... you can't ask me not to try and do everything I can."

"Which includes risking skin and bone at the Chlodwig?"

Lachlan shrugs. "If I have to."

"What if I say I don't want you to?"

Lachlan waits. He's aware he's holding his breath, but it's like his every single nerve is on fire. "Why not?" he tries, still quiet.

"What if I tell you this means nothing to me? What if I tell you we're done here."

Lachlan's breath hitches as he lets it out in a rush. He stands, as mechanically as a robot, and picks up his discarded jacket. He looks down at the rest of his clothes, then back up at Adair. "Then I'd tell you I'll see you at the Wars."

Adair doesn't move, doesn't flinch, doesn't try to stop Lachlan as he walks out.

And that right there? That hurts more than anything else.

Chapter Seven

"So it's over?"

Lachlan shakes his head. If he talks, if he says anything, he knows he's gonna burst out crying and that's the last, the very last thing he wants to do in front of everyone.

"Lachlan, talk to us, man," Thorn encourages him, nudging his knee with his beer bottle. Lachlan simply shakes his head again and fills up another glass.

They've been trying to get him to talk for the past day. All Lachlan has been able to do was drink himself stupid at Eric's garage and not say anything more than yes or no to any question. That is, until they asked him if 'it' was over. He still can't answer that. He doubts he ever will, but that doesn't stop them from nagging.

Lachlan thinks he ought to understand. They have their reasons. He's the one who dragged them into the whole thing, after all, and now he's sulking like a fifteen year old girl, leaving them all hanging. Stupid, stupid, stupid.

"Did he kick you out?" Rae asks shrewdly, and Lachlan lets out a broken chuckle before finishing his pint in one go.

"That's one way of putting it," he whispers, hating the way his voice sounds. Broken. Shredded.

"But why?" Thorn asks again, frowning, and glaring at Rae when he steps on his foot. "What?"

Rae shakes his head and leans toward Lachlan, grasping his shoulder. "Don't mind him."

Lachlan smiles humorlessly. "It's okay," he whispers again, looking around for another bottle. "It's fine."

Eric sighs and hands him one. "That's the shittiest lie I've ever heard. Man, please. Pull yourself together, will you? We can't prepare ourselves on our own."

Lachlan merely looks at him. "Prepare?"

"For the Wars," Keith finishes. "We're close enough to win."

"We aren't," Lachlan argues, tears burning at the back of his eyes. "We lost." He's lost, that's for sure. Eric is staring at him, and Lachlan shoots him a glare, as though daring him to say *I told you so*.

That's not what Eric says. "We've come so far, the least we can do is try again."

"And lose again?"

"What do we have to lose, exactly?" Keith chimes in. "Come on. You wanted to challenge him, this is your chance. Now there are no more games between the two of you, just the War. The best man wins and all that shit."

Lachlan would love to say it didn't hurt hearing it spit out like that. He would also be lying.

"I say we go," Thorn says, standing up and crossing his arms above his chest. "And we fight. And if they kick our asses, whatever, it's been good up to now, right? I mean, we showed them we're not afraid. We've proved ourselves to be just as good as they are. They know it. And forgive me for saying this, Adair knows it too."

Lachlan starts to shake his head in denial, but Thorn goes on, "It's true. This is why he told you to go. He doesn't want you there. He's afraid of you being there because he can't control it -- and from what you tell me, he's a bit of a control freak like that."

"If you really give a shit about him, man, you gotta finish what you started," Keith says, looking into Lachlan's troubled face above the rim of his glass. "At least you'll know you tried everything you could."

Lachlan knows Keith's right. It would take a bitter dose of pride-swallowing to admit to that -- he doesn't know if he's drunk enough.

"Sleep this off," Keith pats him on the back as he stands. Simultaneously, Rae and Thorn do so, too. "We'll be back first thing in the morning and you'll be sober, and we'll plan a routine that will kick Adair and his whole crew's ass."

Lachlan shakes his head, simply because it feels good. It feels like it could clear it a little, but the solace is temporary. He groans and presses his closed fist against his eyes. "I think I'm going to throw up."

"Bucket over there. Spill, and you lick it up," Eric says sternly, stepping away from the table at the same. "Sober up. We have a War to win."

Lachlan nods weakly, and looks at the door closing behind Keith, Thorn and Rae's backs. "I definitely need to throw up," he mutters, which would be code for "thank you," or at least it is in his head. He knows Eric will understand, anyway.

Eric presses the bucket in his hands with a shake of his head. "Get to sleep, drama queen."

Lachlan takes Eric's advice, as soon as he's emptied the contents of his stomach and drank something like two liters of water. He climbs up on his bunk and lies face down on the cool sheets, the wheels in his mind whirring nonstop.

He's still planning when he drifts off to sleep.

Adair's face, Adair's voice telling him to get out, haunt his dreams.

* * *

The Chlodwig is pretty empty when Adair gets there. Ezra and Morgan are already at his table, but they're on their own. He has no idea where Dagan is, probably lost fucking somewhere. The kid is hornier than a ten-peckered owl. Adair nods at the two of his crew present, and waves the bartender over as he slides in the booth next to them.

"Wow. You do look like death warmed over."

Adair smirks. "Thanks, Morgan. And how are you?"

"Seriously, man." Morgan's eyes almost bug out of his head as he stares at him. Adair thinks maybe he should have put more effort in that thing called sleep over the past week. He hasn't been getting much since -- well, he just hasn't been sleeping.

"Are you sure you're good for tonight?"

"What kind of question is that?" Adair answers crossly. "Of course I am."

The bartender puts three beer bottles in front of them with a nod, and Adair passes him a bill without looking. He takes a long swig, hoping it'll soothe the raging rhino that has taken to dancing the rumba at the back of his head.

"If you're worried about those riders," Ezra begins, looking expectant. "They haven't been around in days. Apparently no runs are passing through either. We scared 'em off for good."

"Great," Adair says, feigning enthusiasm. He knows he's not doing a great job of it, and curses himself for not being at the top of his game. He's really fucking this up, and he knows he can't stall Ezra and Morgan's questions much longer.

Hopefully he won't have to. Hopefully the heartache will fade, with time, and copious amounts of booze.

He can do it. He can forget him. It's not like Lachlan has been the one good thing happening in his life. He always brought more trouble than he was worth, really. "I can't wait for this place to fill up," he says, voice gruff as he reaches for his beer bottle again.

"It's Friday," Ezra says, relaxing in his chair. "Won't be room to swing a cat by the time the other crews roll around."

"Good, good." Adair prays that he's right. A full night of fights will help him take his mind off things.

Dagan joins them four beer bottles later, slightly buzzed and beaming with the afterglow of "A monumental fuck," in his own words.

Adair surprises himself at the spark of jealousy that goes off in his chest. Christ, how far gone is he? He shakes his head and stands up. The place is packed by now, and there's no way he can grab the bartender's attention long enough for him to bring them drinks. He sighs and slinks back into his booth. Riff is already collecting bets, and the first two crews have barely started to warm up. Looks like it's going to be a busy night.

Just what Adair needs.

* * *

The night flows by. Only two crews have reached high enough to fight against them, and in both cases, Adair has sent them to the curb after merely two exchanges. It's almost too easy. Too easy to lose himself in the rhythm and surpass their contestants.

He doesn't even have to work for it. Those guys suck. There's no juice in the challenge, and Adair keeps telling himself it has got nothing to do with Lachlan's absence. Nothing at all. These crews simply don't have what it takes to be at the Chlodwig.

Which doesn't mean Lachlan and those other riders had anything at all. Not at all. He's just tired of the routine, that's all.

"And the winner is... Midnight's crew, again! Give it up, folks."

Adair nods at the clapping and cheering crowd, and steps back with the guys to collect their money.

Or at least, he tries to. There's movement at the end of the dance floor, something that grabs his attention, and he turns around with a frown, his hand already halfway down Riff's money bucket.

What he sees makes his heart trip hastily in his chest until it hurts to fucking breathe. On the dance floor, boots kicking up a cloud of sawdust, Lachlan and his crew stand, ready to fight.

Seven days without seeing Lachlan, and it fucking rips his soul apart. How in the hell he ever managed months, Adair has no clue. Not a goddamn one.

"What the fuck!" Ezra shouts from behind him, and Adair has to throw an arm out to stop him from going up in Lachlan's face.

"Stand back," Adair hisses. "Now."

"But Adair --"

"I have eyes. I can see just as well as you can." He steps away from Riff and looks around at the crowd, which has gone remarkably quiet. "You folks ready for another War?"

They all yell and cheer, their feet thundering on the uneven ground, and Adair gestures for his crew to stay back. Lachlan steps to the middle of the floor, the other four guys standing right behind him in a straight line.

Lachlan simply looks at him, fire in his dark eyes, and spreads his arms wide. *Come get it* -- it's spelled out in every movement, but it's not directed at Adair, and that does nothing if not stir Adair's turmoil.

They begin to move. It's fast and furious, legs and arms flying in the air as they pair up and split up again, changing partners, fingers linking around waist and hips, movements sinuous, sinful. Lachlan bends over, their hands slide over his bare chest as they gather around him, obscuring him from view. Adair growls in the back of his throat, almost unknowingly, eyes narrowing on the display before him, but he realizes with painful clarity that he has no further claim on Lachlan.

He *did* say it was over. He's tried to get rid of him, tried to make Lachlan stop ruining his life for Adair, and that had brought him nothing.

The music picks up rhythm, and so do the riders. It's frenetic, and Adair feels the blood rushing from his head down to his groin just watching him.

They need to top that performance right now. "Let's go," he calls behind him, and Morgan and Dagan immediately step before him, setting in position.

It's the Dance Wars equivalent of a bloodbath. Hurt in their pride, Adair's crew pulls no punches as they put everything they have into their routine. They want to win. Adair wants to win. He wants --

He doesn't know what he wants. As he whips around, his hands on Ezra's hips, legs tangled as they walk up in the middle of the floor before letting go and leaving room for Morgan and Dagan, he knows Lachlan's following his every move, his eyes a physical presence at the back of his neck.

They finish their routine with a pyramid formation, Dagan and Morgan both on Ezra and Adair's shoulders, standing above the mind-numbing roar of the crowd. Adair smiles, waiting until Riff yells, again, who is the night's winner, but before the broker

has all his words out, Lachlan steps forward again, his crew behind him in the middle of the floor.

"This ain't how it works," Adair says through gritted teeth. "You've lost. Clear out."

"I was under the impression that we could challenge with how many routines we had," Lachlan says evenly, his arms crossed above his chest. "Or are you scared?"

Adair knows perfectly well he shouldn't rise to the bait, but rise he does, and he steps back, jaws grinding together as he leaves the floor for Lachlan's crew.

From there on out, it's mayhem. Adair has no idea how many times they manage to answer to their challenge. It feels like hours, even though it's probably only a handful of minutes. For every routine Adair presents, Lachlan and the riders have one to match, in a continuous back and forth that leaves each dancer breathless and frustrated.

This has to stop, or the night will go on forever.

When Adair's crew steps back, Lachlan takes the initiative. He walks up to Adair, arms crossed, with that twinkle in his eye that spells trouble.

"We're both winning."

"We are," Adair spits back. "You, I'm not so sure."

"Looks like it, though," Lachlan says evenly, his arms spread open to indicate the cheering crowd around him. "So I've thought of something."

Adair waits, his heartbeat rushing in his ears.

"This is between me and you," Lachlan says, not troubling to keep his voice low. Adair blanches, but Lachlan goes on. "We'll do this your way. One on one. Last man standing. Whoever wins gets it all. If you win, you can do with me whatever you want. I belong to you."

Adair feels the floor start to shake beneath his feet, and he doesn't know how much of it's only a metaphor.

"If I win," Lachlan goes on, and it's quieter this time, it feels like there is no one else around them. "I can do with you whatever I want. And you," Lachlan takes

another step, their faces now close enough to count all of Lachlan's stupidly long eyelashes, "Belong to me."

Fuck.

Adair has no choice. He knows it, just as clearly as he knows this has been Lachlan's plan all along. Adair would fucking strangle him, if he didn't feel like grabbing hold of Lachlan and kissing him within an inch of his life.

"I'm in," Adair says, his throat strangely dry.

Lachlan grabs his hand and squeezes. "You go first."

Lachlan leaves the dance floor and a sudden silence falls on the Chlodwig, like a breeze has swept in to take everything that wasn't the low thrumming of the music and the muted, harsh breathing of the contestants, away.

Adair steps up. It's now or never.

* * *

Front, left, front, right. Adair moves like a cat, his hips swaying to the music, muscles rippling with every turn, every step he takes. He keeps his eyes half closed, but he still knows where Lachlan is every time he turns.

One thing Lachlan said is completely true. It's between the two of them. Always is, always has been.

Adair rolls on his knees, spinning in a semicircle before ending his number with a full split, legs wide open and parallel to the ground, the corded muscles in his arms straining with the effort to keep himself up. The crowd goes crazy, clapping and smashing their feet on the ground in appreciation, and Adair stands, moving back to his crew, eyes still trained on Lachlan's face.

Lachlan smiles, like he hasn't got a care in the world. He rolls his shoulders and takes his place in the middle of the floor, just where Adair was.

The music stops for a split second, then a slow, more seductive tune begins.

Lachlan starts undoing the buttons of his jacket, slowly, one by one, his head thrown back as he sways to the bass rhythm. He tosses his jacket away, his tank top

stretching over finely sculpted muscles, and grins, he downright grins at Adair as he advances, slowly undulating to the music.

It's animalistic, the way Lachlan moves. It's not as much a dance as it is a mating ritual. He exudes sexuality, the way his hands slide down his chest, his legs opening wider with each step, back bowed in a perfect arch as he brushes the ground with his fingertips before bouncing back up again. Everyone's eyes are trained on Lachlan, the cloud of *want* he radiates almost intoxicating.

Adair can only stare, his mind swaying, torn between anxiety, anger and need. He will never stop needing Lachlan, much like a drug, his favorite damn disease. This much he knows, even if he doesn't know anything else.

Lachlan ends his number holding himself up with his hands, legs straight upwards before he sinuously curls himself up in a ball, arms around his knees, and a sultry look in Adair's direction.

The Chlodwig shakes from its fundamentals, the patrons uncontrolled in their cheers, but Adair doesn't hear any of it, only a dull, distant throbbing that can't even manage to cover the sound of his heart beating fast against his ribcage.

It's over.

It's done.

Adair has lost his first challenge.

He can vaguely hear Ezra and Dagan yell in the background, something Morgan is saying, but nothing makes sense. Lachlan is uncurling from his position on the ground, advancing on him.

Adair knows he should be mad. He should be threatening, he should be growling at Lachlan to get out of his face... Adair swallows. "You won."

Lachlan frames his neck with his hands, bringing Adair closer. "You're mine now. All mine."

"No!" Ezra grits out, but Adair raises his hand, turning to look at his crew. He's startled to see the devastation on their faces.

Part of him never really believed they cared about him more than about what he represented, a solid meal and money in their pockets.

"He won fair and square," Adair says, voice quiet. "And I won't give him the satisfaction of going back on my word."

"But --"

"Rules are rules," Adair says grimly. He squeezes Ezra's shoulder, then turns to Morgan and Dagan. "Will you boys be okay?"

"We'll manage," Morgan whispers, his face pinched tight.

Dagan looks at Lachlan with such murder in his eyes that Adair deems it safer to get out of there now, before the situation escalates. "I'll see you," he says finally, wrapping Dagan in a one armed, manly hug before stepping away, Lachlan and his crew by his side.

Dagan turns his back on him before he can say anything else. The crowd is still whistling and clapping, and Riff is handing Lachlan more money than Adair has seen in his whole career at the Chlodwig.

"Time to leave," Lachlan whispers in his ear.

Adair glares at him, but what the hell can he do? He follows as Lachlan leads the way out of the Chlodwig, out of the remains of Adair's life.

The night is crisp and clean, cool air whipping across Adair's face, washing away the sweat and the thrill of the war. Adrenaline is still pumping strong, but not so thick as to obscure it obscures the reality in front of him.

"We'll see you in Baltimore?" someone asks Lachlan. It's not the guy with the Mohawk, it's another one of them, but before Adair can figure out whether he should say something or not, Lachlan shakes his head.

"Not tonight. You'll know when I get there."

The guy snorts. "Sure will."

"Bye, Lachlan."

"Bye, man." The Mohawked guy clasps Lachlan's shoulder, then looks at Adair with a smile. "We'll see you, too. Finally."

Adair has no clue what the hell he's supposed to say, so he doesn't say anything, merely glaring a little. He can hear Lachlan chuckle beside him, and he snaps, turning around to face Lachlan just as the rest of the riders take off on their bikes.

"What now?" Adair grits out, his fists balled at his sides.

Lachlan looks calmly at him. "I want out," he says quietly. "I want to be able to stay with you, somewhere safe, somewhere we can be together."

"I told you --"

"You're just too fucking scared to change!" Lachlan grinds out, grabbing a handful of Adair's hair. "I know you, Adair. I know you hate this. I know you hate Cedric for what he turned you into, for the life he condemned you to. Well, for fuck's sake, it doesn't have to be like that. Not anymore. It doesn't. We can *be* together, without fucking responsibilities. We can be like everyone else."

Adair swallows, hardly daring to believe it. "You didn't give me much choice."

"Because you did?" Lachlan laughs, crazed, hysterical. "You *are* something else."

Adair shakes his head, and tentatively lifts one hand to comb through Lachlan's hair. "You know what this means, right?"

"I do." Lachlan says, his voice completely serious. "Better than you, probably."

"I was trying to protect you," Adair finally admits, and it's surprising how easy it is to breathe now.

"I know," Lachlan murmurs, leaning in closer. "That's why I never gave up on you."

It's not like them to go slow, but their mouths sort of meet halfway, hesitant, then growing bolder, tongues licking, tasting, exploring. Teeth nibble just as Lachlan's hands find the soft spot at Adair's nape, fingers rubbing in a circle, and Adair gasps quietly in his mouth, pulling Lachlan closer.

"Let's get out of here," Adair murmurs, holding Lachlan tight against him.

Lachlan nods and smiles. "Best idea you've had all year."

Chapter Eight

By the time they reach the inside of Adair's cabin, they've already undressed one another, hopping out of clothes as though they didn't have all the time in the world. It's funny, Lachlan thinks, he'll never get used to it, to just have time to spend with Adair, time to do whatever it is they haven't been able to do so far.

Adair's mouth sucks on the back of his neck, hands framing his hips as he pulls him back against his body. Lachlan shudders slightly, his hands catching Adair's and holding them around his waist, twitching, waiting.

"You smell good." Adair kisses his way down Lachlan's throat.

"I smell like sweat and sawdust."

"Just the way I like it," Adair purrs, pulling Lachlan along and tossing him down on the bed.

Lachlan laughs, softly, his eyes twinkling merrily at him. "Freak."

"Agreed," Adair murmurs as he crawls up the bed, his predatory eyes fixed on Lachlan's.

Lachlan opens his legs to accommodate Adair between them, his hands skimming over Adair's sides as he brings him closer. He's never seen Adair looking quite so relaxed, and if it weren't for the fact that it's completely stupid and overemotional, Lachlan thinks he could cry.

It'd been worth all of it. A hundred times over.

Adair nuzzles the skin of Lachlan's neck, catching hold of his wandering hands and pressing him into the bedding. Lachlan tilts his neck to the side, lapping at Adair's chest to overcompensate for the lack of hand-touching. He uses his teeth on his nipples, and a thrill of pleasure rakes down his spine when Adair shudders and bites Lachlan's collarbone in answer.

It's not as frantic as it used to be. Lachlan's heart has swelled to three times its size, and he cherishes every little touch, every move, every soft kiss and nibble. He can feel himself growing uncomfortably hard, but he doesn't even mind. He doesn't want to rush this. It's the first time of the rest of their lives, there's no need for them to hurry.

"Where do you think we should go?" Adair murmurs, pinning Lachlan's wrists above his head as he descends on his body with his mouth, teeth pulling at the tender skin and down on the curve of Lachlan's hipbone, his cheek accidentally-on-purpose brushing against the head of Lachlan's dick. He moves lower, his tongue dipping in Lachlan's navel, and Lachlan bucks up against the wet heat, mewling softly between tightly pressed lips. "Adair --"

"Shh," Adair whispers, his tongue trailing all the way down to Lachlan's cock, grinning softly as Lachlan's hips roll forward, and he barely restrains a moan.

"Fuck, don't tease me," Lachlan begs, his legs spreading wider, thighs shaking with the strain. A fat dollop of precome oozes from Lachlan's tip onto his stomach, and Adair chases it with his tongue, sucking a bruise into the tender skin of Lachlan's abs as he licks it up.

Lachlan groans, his hands twitching in Adair's grip, and he struggles to break free, his cock growing harder as Adair's tongue draws long, wet swathes down his length and across his tight balls.

"Adair, if you don't do something I swear to God --"

"What?" Adair chuckles, his eyes dark with mischief. "What are you going to do?"

Lachlan grits his teeth together. He tightens his ankles around Adair's waist and pushes, managing to roll them over messily until he's lying on top of Adair. "This," he says with a grin, now pinning Adair down on the mattress.

Adair raises one eyebrow at him, smiling slightly. "And now?"

Lachlan wraps his hand around Adair's dick, squeezing none too gently as he descends on his body with his mouth, much like Adair had done to him before. He

spends time on his quest, pulling and sucking at Adair's nipples until they are red and sore, and Adair is groaning beneath him, lost between pleasure and pain.

Lachlan's teeth rake down the beautiful, rippling muscles of Adair's chest and he nibbles at the indent of his navel, suckling the reddening skin before moving lower, down to the juncture of pelvis and thigh.

"Fuck, Lachlan, come on," Adair grunts, his legs twitching in an effort to keep still. Lachlan smiles coyly down at him, his lips parted as he blows cool puffs of air over the leaking head of his dick. "Fuck," Adair grunts again, his hands shooting up in Lachlan's hair, trying desperately to hold onto *something*. Lachlan moans happily, his own dick hard and curled upwards against his belly as he braces himself with both hands splayed on Adair's hips, his lips stretching around Adair's balls.

Adair downright whimpers and ruts up against Lachlan's face. He's wild, completely bared under Lachlan's touch, and Lachlan feels a thrill of possession running down his spine, something pure that no one else is allowed to share.

He presses his tongue flat against the crease of Adair's ass, having him shudder at the briefest contact, then he drags it all the way up to the crown of his dick, lips closing around the tip, sucking in the dribbles of precome that trail down Adair's cock.

"Fuck, Lach, goddammit -- fuck!" Adair grunts and snaps his hips forward, his cock bouncing against Lachlan's lips and smearing precome all over them, white and sticky. Adair presses his head back against the bedding, panting harshly. His fingers flex in Lachlan's hair, and Lachlan dives down again, taking Adair as deep as he can go, his throat muscles flitting around the tip. He swallows him down, and Adair's hands yank painfully at Lachlan's hair, tugging a few strands free in his frenzy.

Lachlan blinks back tears as he tries to brace himself and relax his throat, letting Adair fuck up into his mouth as he pleases. Adair moans under his breath, legs quivering, his hips frantically rotating as he tries to get in deeper, faster.

Lachlan groans, the vibrations shooting all the way up Adair's cock, and Adair violently pulls Lachlan off him, barely in time for his come to splatter all over Lachlan's face, his nose, his lips, his cheeks, in his open mouth.

"Fuck," Lachlan moans, his tongue darting out to lick at his lips. Adair stares at him, his hands still tangled in his air, then he pulls him all the way up his body, his mouth trailing messily all over Lachlan's face, licking up his own come.

"So hot, Lachlan, fuck, so fucking hot."

Lachlan moans again, his fingernails raking down Adair's arms as he spreads his legs over his groin, the curve of his ass fitting perfectly against Adair's still half-hard cock. "Want you to fuck me," Lachlan groans, his tongue meeting halfway with Adair's, tasting like salt and sweat and sex. He rolls his hips backwards, catching the wet head of Adair's cock against his balls, and he shivers, clutching at Adair's biceps. "Want to feel you in me for weeks. Want you to fuck me until I can't fucking walk."

Adair grunts and wraps one arm around Lachlan's waist, lifting him up and seating him over his thighs, Lachlan's blood heavy dick bumping against Adair's hot, pulsing one. "I'll give you what you want," Adair whispers, his tongue following a path down Lachlan's neck, catching a stray trail of come as he aligns his dick against Lachlan, his hand wrapping tight around the both of them.

Lachlan keens loudly, his mouth open in a breathless cry as he jerks forward in Adair's fist, the sensation knocking the wind out of him. Adair pumps his hand fast and rough, the friction of his calloused palm coupled with the scorching hot feel of Adair's dick against Lachlan's making their heads spin.

Lachlan bucks on Adair's lap, his hands grasping Adair's shoulders for balance as he ruts up in his hand, the head of his weeping cock pushing past Adair's tight fingers and brushing against Adair's stiffening dick.

"Adair," Lachlan moans, sweat dripping down his brow into his eyes. "Adair, please --"

"Not yet," Adair murmurs, slowing down his hand until he's barely pulling at Lachlan's oversensitive dick. "Not yet. Not until I'm buried deep in your little ass, and I will make you come so hard you'll forget everything, everything but my name."

Lachlan whimpers, his head falling backwards, the long column of his neck exposed for Adair's leisure. Adair pushes himself up to a sitting position, his teeth

sinking into the tendons of Lachlan's neck, and hoists him up until Lachlan is kneeling right above his cock. "Fuck yourself on my dick," Adair orders, his breath damp against the bruised skin of Lachlan's neck. "I want to see you ride me, want to see you lose it."

Lachlan whimpers, his lower lip pulled between his teeth, eyes squeezed shut. Adair's hands feel burning hot on Lachlan's hips, holding him in place, not letting him go anywhere.

Lachlan cocks his head up and throws Adair a smoldering look. He shifts his legs even wider apart and sinks down on Adair's cock, the burn and stretch raw, painful and *so good*.

"Jesus," Adair breathes, clutching Lachlan tight enough to hurt. "Lachlan --"

Lachlan gasps, his stomach pulling in as he fights to keep going, knowing that the blurring of pleasure and pain will give way soon enough to overwhelming bliss. He breathes heavily through his mouth, his fingernails leaving raised welt-marks on Adair's back. He finally seats himself fully on Adair's cock, groaning at the sensation, and leans back, bracing his hands behind him on Adair's legs. Muscles tightening, abs flexing, he rolls his hips and sinks down that extra inch.

Adair groans, his eyes squeezed tightly shut, gasping for breath. Lachlan moans wantonly and presses the heels of his feet into the mattress, slowly starting to push up a few inches before sinking back down again in a sloppy, messy rhythm that has the both of them moaning in agony and ecstasy.

Adair pushes himself up further, bracing his feet wide apart and putting both hands on Lachlan's hips as he lifts him up and almost completely off his dick. Lachlan groans in protest, his hips stuttering mid-air. "Adair, fuck, please, just --"

Before he can say another word, Adair snaps his hips up as he drags Lachlan down, effectively bouncing Lachlan on his balls and making Lachlan cry out helplessly.

Adair leans in to bite and suckle at Lachlan's chest, then lower, his tongue following the line of his pecs before he twists his tongue around a nipple.

"Taste good," Adair mumbles incoherently. "So good, Lach."

Lachlan moans continuously, his legs supporting almost all his weight as he undulates himself on Adair's lap, Lachlan's body a perfect diagonal line under the arch of Adair's torso.

"So fucking gorgeous," Adair chants, licking his way up to Lachlan's mouth, tongue easily dipping between Lachlan's lips.

Lachlan groans and tips his head forward, almost knocking into Adair's as he pulls one of his legs up and above the crook of Adair's arm, spreading himself as wide as he can.

Adair groans desperately as Lachlan slides all the way down on his dick, clenching like a vise around him. Lachlan garbles out a startled cry and rolls back, every thrust hitting his prostate in the new position.

"Yes, God yes, yes yes *yes* --" Lachlan whimpers, sweaty hands slipping on Adair's legs as he keeps going, finesse long forgotten as he fucks himself on Adair's cock, just as Adair had asked.

Lachlan had never felt this turned on before. Never. Not even the very first time. It's probably because of the adrenaline still running high after the War, or probably because he knows he doesn't have anywhere else to be now. He is exactly where he wants to be, where he is going to be, until the end of the days.

Lachlan bites the inside of his mouth. It's too much, too good, too everything.

"God, Lachlan," Adair whispers, reverently, his lips brushing against Lachlan's mouth and that's it. That's Lachlan's undoing.

He comes hard, thick uneven spurts that cover his and Adair's stomachs. Adair seizes the opportunity and knocks them off balance, lurching forward and driving deep into the tight heat of Lachlan's body. He thrusts as hard as he can, Lachlan arching up against him with a startled cry.

Adair doesn't last much longer. The tremors that run through Lachlan with the aftershocks of his orgasm are enough to trigger his own release, and he comes with a blissed out moan, his face buried in the crook of Lachlan's neck.

Lachlan's hands tangle in Adair's hair. He holds onto Adair, almost afraid that if he opens his eyes, the Wars wouldn't have taken place and this will be only a beautiful, taunting dream.

Adair's fingers dance up his arm and to his face, tilting it up to meet his glance. "You managed to get what you wanted in the end," Adair whispers, his voice gruff and rough. "Wonder how long it'll be before you get tired of it." *Of me.*

"Never," Lachlan whispers, cringing at the sound of his own voice. "Never," he repeats, hoping to sound more assertive.

"I'm still a werewolf," Adair says, his fingertips following the shape of Lachlan's cheekbones. "I'm pretty sure you can't work that one out."

"That's half the fun," Lachlan grins, bright and honest. He frames Adair's face with his palms, his smile softening toward something different, more intimate. "Adair, I meant what I said, and I will always mean it."

"You're insane," Adair whispers softly. "Certifiably insane."

Lachlan rolls his eyes at him and pushes himself up on his elbows, glaring at Adair through the curtain of his sweaty hair. "I'm pretty sure you and Eric are going to get along like a house on fire," he mutters, thinking back to all the times his friends have told him (in great detail) just how crazy he is.

"So what's the plan?" Adair asks, his eyes gleaming, free from the shadows that have hung there for as long as Lachlan can remember. It's almost too much for Lachlan to bear, and he bites the inside of his tongue, trying to keep his emotions in check.

"We can get out of here, for one," he murmurs, smiling a little. "Then we can see about selling my bike, get out into the country."

"And then?"

"We'll cross that bridge when we get there, okay?" Lachlan says, leaning in to steal a quiet kiss from the corner of Adair's mouth. "I'm in no rush."

"No rush," Adair agrees, wrapping his arms around Lachlan and pulling him up close. "No rush at all."

Lachlan holds on for dear life, his fingers sinking in the muscles of Adair's back.

"I love you," Adair whispers, his voice breaking on the last syllable, quivering with awe.

Lachlan's breath hitches, and he finally sheds a tear, just one, his heart beating so fast in his ribcage he's sure he's going to burst. "I love you, too," he murmurs, pulling back to look in Adair's eyes as he says so. "Always did, always will."

Adair smiles and cups the back of Lachlan's head, drawing him in for a soft, quiet kiss, full of promises and tenderness.

It doesn't matter what's going to happen next. They're together, and this is their happy ending. Lachlan will do whatever is in his power to preserve that.

Sophia Titheniel

Shy, bashful, Sophia Titheniel -- NOT! She's part Elf, part video editor, part photographer. She likes her men feisty, snarky, and getting it on with one another!

Originally from Italy, Sophia's now in Vancouver, Canada, and giving her professors heart attacks with her M/M projects.

Obsessed with caffeine, M&M's (pun very much intended) and with everything supernatural, she's known to carry her laptop to the most improbable locations (those include, but are no limited to, beach, bathroom, train, and day-job) to be able to finish whatever she's writing at the moment.

Spirit Boys, her ongoing free serial, makes its home at <http://titheniel.livejournal.com>. Want to harass her to hurry things up? Drop her a note at titheniel01@yahoo.com -- Sophia would like to add she takes full responsibility for any thigh-clench and change of panties that might occur! ;) Enjoy!