

Chapter Three

The fuel filter flies off the sawhorse. Emil smiles and lines up to his next target. He hits it on the third shot. The next one takes him two, then the slide locks on an empty chamber before he hits the last one. The smile is gone. His hand shakes as he releases the magazine and keeps him from getting the replacement in.

I place a hand on the gun, holding it still. "Slow down, Emil. Breathe. Steady your hand."

"I should be getting this already," he says. There is impatience and despair in his voice.

"You've only been at this for five days."

"I should have started as soon as we got back." The magazine goes in, clicks, and he wracks the slide.

"You weren't healed."

"Who fucking cares." Anger replaces the previous emotions. "What if one of Gregory's goons shows up for revenge? How am I going to help if I can't shoot this thing straight?"

"None of them are left, Emil. Or if they are, they know better than to think they can hurt you. And those are not after you, but—" my hand is on the butt of the Desert Eagle in my chest harness at the sound of gravel crunching under feet. Emil's eyes widen in panic at my action. His box triggers many others, but the brightest one is the need to protect him.

"Don't shoot," a man with a thick Tennessee drawl says. "I come in peace."

I move my hand away as I turn, but remain on guard. "You don't normally come this way, Zephyr."

The man shrugs. He's clean-shaven, and his hair is so short it's nothing more than a shadow on his head. A mix of paranoia and working on his sculpture results in his skin being more the olive of his Mediterranean roots than the bronze resulting from the Arizona sun. He wears the heavy leather coat and pants he uses when welding. He must boil from the heat in that, but he isn't even sweating.

"You never brought your friend to introduce him—"

"My son," I correct him. The glow from Emil box increases.

Zephyr raises an eyebrow. He gives Emil a critical look-over, then me, not lingering on my nakedness. He smiles. "I see it. He looks just like you. Then, I'm even happier that I made the walk. Welcome to the reservation..." he trails off.

And Emil answers. "Emil." I will have to help him break that reflex.

"Emil..." he trails off again.

Emil hesitates as he opens his mouth and looks at me.

"It's just Emil," I tell Zephyr. "Just like I've told you before, I'm just Tristan. What do you want?"

"Are you really having him fire a Neo?" he asks instead of answering my question. He isn't here simply

to get a last name from me. "Shouldn't he use a real gun?" He reaches at his back and my hand is back on the Desert Eagle. "Easy there. I'm just going to show him my piece."

"And I'm just getting ready in case you have another attack. Remember the last time?"

Zephyr looks around. The fear in his eyes is undisguised until he gets it under control.

His paranoia is justified. Before joining the reservation, a little more than a decade ago, assassination attempts on him were a monthly thing. He has it under control most of the time, but not all of it. It's why he rarely ventures out. His attacks cause less damage when he is in a place he considers safe. The last time he had one outside, he considered the residents to be plant of his former employer and tried to exterminate us.

"I'm okay," he finally says, then slowly takes out a Browning HP-35 and shows it to Emil, barrel pointed up and the safety on. He smiles. "Now, you and me can't really use the hand cannon your father—"

"My dad," Emil corrects him.

"Father, dad, same thing," Zephyr replies dismissively.

"My father tried to kill me." Emil's voice shakes with anger. "My dad keeps me safe."

Zephyr's amusement vanishes. "Is he serious?"

"I am," Emil snaps.

Zephyr's gaze lingers on me, waiting for a confirmation I don't give. I won't have him dismiss Emil simply because he's young. Zephyr has training in telling if someone lies.

"Fuck, kid. I am so sorry, no—"

"I'm nineteen!" Emil yells in exasperation and Zephyr studies him again.

This time, when he checks with me, I nod. Years of living on the move and malnutrition means Emil is smaller than he should be for his age. The reading I've done tells me I won't know if the proper diet now will result in catching up unless he has a growth spur, but at nineteen, that's unlikely.

"I'm sorry. No one should have to be afraid of his father."

"I'm not afraid of him. He's dead."

"And I'm guessing your dad killed him?"

Emil nods.

"Good on you," Zephyr says as if he's been told Emil would a school award, then goes back to what he'd started on. "Anyway. You need a lot of upper body strength not to have a Desert Eagle rip your arm off, so you're going to want one of these. A High Power 35. Great accuracy and penetration power."

"And stopped by a heavy wool shirt," I say with derision. "Nine mils aren't worth the brass they're made from."

"No, it's not," he replies in annoyance. "Are you really going to move him from the Neo to an Eagle? You're going to have to transition him, so he might as well use the Browning."

"What do you do?" Emil asks.

The question takes Zephyr by surprise, and he needs a few seconds to answer it. "I'm a sculptor. I work with metal."

"And before that?"

"I was a spook," he answers proudly.

"He was an assassin for the CIA," I correct. "The spying happened on the side for anyone who paid him."

Zephyr's expression darkens.

"Don't look at me that way. You made your own enemies. If you didn't want to be hunted, you shouldn't have betrayed your employer, or covered your tracks better."

"Says the who brought how many cars filled with thugs to the reservation?" Zephyr counters. "Word is that if Jack hadn't put his foot down, you'd have returned with yet more last time you went out."

"I'm dealing with that." I realize my slip at the worried glance Emil gives me. I am going to have to tell him about the Mexico angle earlier than I'd planned. "You don't see me get pissed anytime one of your brings it up."

"Yeah, fine. So I used to kill people for a living." He smiles. "You don't have to worry. I'm not going to hurt you."

"I'm not worried."

"You aren't?" Zephyr isn't used to someone not considering him at least a little of a threat once they find out his past.

"My dad's going to kill you before you can hurt me."

Zephyr chuckles, trying to hide his nervousness. "He really trusts you."

“I’ve killed enough men to keep him safe. It’s justified. Now, you said your hellos so you can go back to your sculptures and let Emil practice.”

He puts the HP-35 away while he thinks over something. Possibly how wise it is to push for whatever actually brought him here. Then he smiles. “That’s a dismissal if I ever head one. Come down for a visit at some point, if your dad ever lets you, and I’ll show you what I made from the cars the thugs who came here to kill your dad and his boyfriend drove.” He turns and walks away.

I remain vigilant until well after he disappears.

Emil stays silent until I take my hand off the Desert Eagle. “Does he think I didn’t know about you and pop after the number of weekends he spent here?”

I shrug. “Zephyr lives in a world of secrets, and he believes no one reveals anything unless forced to do so.” He heads to the saw horse and line up a new set of fuel filters. “Are you ready to get back to your practice?”

Emil takes position and, once I’m next to him, hits all five with one magazine.

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The car stops on the side of the road.

It’s a large SUV, but I can’t make out the model in the dark at this distance. I stand within the trees, waiting for Bart to exit. For him to approach, try to find me in the night. Try to get the upper hand.

After two minutes without movement from the SUV, I decide he was able to exit without me noticing. This game we play has been good training. He isn’t as careful as I’d like yet, but he’s getting there.

When I can get him to slow down and take the time to think, he comes up with decent plans. When I can get him to slow down.

Bart is too impulsive.

I search for motion in the darkness. Around the SUV, near the house. For half an hour, that is where my attention is fixed; which is why the branch breaking behind me catches me by surprise.

I don’t react, but now I am listening instead of watching. That wasn’t the sound of an animal; I know all those sounds. It was a man stepping where he shouldn’t. Now that I am paying attention, I make out the careful steps, the faint crunching of the underbrush.

The box containing pro vibrates pleasantly and Bart’s box glows in response. He is indeed improving. Just a month ago, he wouldn’t have made it this close.

When I can almost feel his body heard against my back, I spin and bat the hand holding the Beretta out of the way. I reach for his shirt’s collar, but he isn’t wearing one. He isn’t wearing anything.

The annoyance is forced back in its box—I enjoy ripping the clothing off his back—and grab the incoming fist. I spin again, dragging him with me and throwing him past the tree line and onto the ground, the sand and stones. His ground of pain excites me, and him, I see in the moonlight as he stands.

“I could have shot you from a distance,” he says, indicating his Beretta.

“If you wanted me dead, you should have.” I step out of the trees and into the moonlight. His gaze drops to my cock. “If you didn’t want to feel pain.”

He throws the Beretta aside and I make a note to remind him to take better care of his weapon.

“Now, where’s the fun in that?” He grins as he runs at me, building momentum for a kick.

I duck under it, step around him, slap his ass before kicking the other leg out from under him. He rolls and stands, parrying my punch and planting on in my side. The aim is good, but he lacks the strength to make anything of it.

“Where’s your baby?” he asks sounding worried and I ready for the attack the distraction is for. Instead, he says. “You’re not wearing your Eagle.”

“This is training. I don’t intend on killing you, only cause you pain until you’ve earned the pleasure.”

“Not letting me cum last weekend isn’t enough?” he asks.

“Maybe that will motivate you to work harder for it his weekend.”

He comes at me with a flurry of fists and feet. He gets in a few hits. His kicks have more momentum than his punches, but even some of those I feel as he targets areas still not entirely healed. I take the hits as I wait for my opening. I admire how he moves, the determination in his eyes, the way his erection brandies about.

His confidence builds with each hit that gets through my defenses. Maybe he believes he is finally getting the better of me, or he hopes that the harder he comes at me, the harder I’ll cum at him afterward. Then, as I expect, he tips to overconfidence and when he over extends himself I have his wrist in my hand, spin and throw him over me. The air is forced out of him as he hits the ground, but he still rolls out of the way before my kick connects. I watch his bloody, sand encrusted back, and his ass.

That ass is a distraction. Round, firm, inviting. Watching it costs me and I don't fully avoid the kick aimed at my calf. I'm off balance.

"You want it?" Bart wiggles it instead of pressing his advantage. "You're going to have to work for it." When he turns to face me, I've regained my balance.

"I thought you wanted to cum at some point this weekend," I chastise him, hoping the reminder will get him to focus.

"Don't you want me to cum?" he smirks and licks his lips as he looks me over. "How often did you jerk off thinking of what you're going to do to me tonight?"

"I haven't."

The hurt is all over his face. "You don't jerk off to me?"

"I don't jerk off." I attack while he's surprised at the statement. His arm is up in time to block the punch, but he staggers back. I bat the strike aside and step against him, our hard cocks touching. I have a leg behind him as he realized the proximity isn't a good thing, but I'm helping him back and down with a shove before he can react.

He's on his back again, but this time, before he can scramble away, I straddle him, trapping his cock under me.

"Having you here every weekend, enjoying you, your pain, your pleasure, is more than I need to last me until you next visit," I tell him, unsure how that is a revelation to him after all this time.

He tried to get free, even manages to scape a inch of motion at the cost of his back, by the pain on his face. His cock slides under my ball, our dirty sweat adding as our lubricant, and a box that isn't often noticed trembles.

I lay a hand on his chest. "That is enough." I move back and forth over his cock. "You fought well."

"Still got my ass handed to me," Bart replies, panting.

"This you think you'd win?" I rub my hand over his chest, uncaring of the sand and small stone I'm scraping over his skin. "Did you want to win? Knowing what losing to me gains you?" I pinch his nipple.

He moans. "I have to want to win. If I just go through the motions of fighting you, you aren't going to go through your motions of taking me."

I reach behind, then between us, and pull his cock free. "I'm going to take something different tonight." I move until his cock is between my ass cheeks and rub it.

"Tristan," he gasps, "this isn't—" he lets out a cry as I squeeze his cock hard.

"Are you telling me what I'm allowed to do with you?"

He shakes his head. "But you don't—"

"Need this often," I finish for him, pushing his cock against my hole. "But tonight, I do." I push down and gasps as he stretches me. The sand doesn't help, but I'm set on my course. I still the box containing pain and let the one with my pleasure sing.

Bart curses the entire time he enters me. He doesn't have my training at ignoring pain, but he enjoys it. He trembles at the mix of sensations his cock sends through him. I expect that is one area where pain and pleasure don't often mix.

I am back sitting on him. I am panting. He groans as I squeeze my ass on his cock.

"I won't last long like this," he warns me.

"Then you better stop laying there and get to work."

His confusion lasts a second, then he wipes his hand on his chest as best as he can before spitting into it and wrapping it around my cock. The abrasion is minor, the pleasure major. I sigh as his hand strokes my cock. I tighten my ass on his to keep him hard and as a reminder of the situation he's in.

"Don't talk," I say as he opens his mouth. "Focus on what you're doing if you want me to let you cum."

His mouth snaps shut and he tightens his grip on my cock.

I moan.

He knows me well by now. I haven't instructed him on what I enjoy; he noticed those details on his own. How tightly I like my cock to be gripped. How fast to stoke.

I gasp

That twist of the hand over my crown. He has me panting, and I move on him; up and down, slowly, then faster.

I watch his face as I move, read the pleasure on his face and his box glows brightly. I should do something more, it seems to tell me, but I have no idea what that might be. I simply enjoy the delight on his face, throughout his body as I fuck myself with his cock.

“Tris—” he gasps. “T—” he stokes faster. Too fast for how I prefer, but I don’t mind. “I’m going to—” The contortion on his face as he tries to concentrate is amusing. “Stop, please. You aren’t—” as if he could order me about. I squeeze my ass as I move up and down, and he screams with a thrust, trying to bury himself, but I continue to move through his orgasm.

Our motions mismatch and his cock slips out. I feel the cum hit my lower back and roll down between my cheeks.

I watch him, the contentment on his face, as he pants. That sense I should do something returns. Unfortunately, it doesn’t bring instructions along.

He opens his eyes. “I wasn’t ready.” I raise an eyebrow. “You haven’t cum yet. You should cum before I do.”

“If I need to cum before you, I will.”

His hand is back on my leaking cock. “You have that kind of control?” The precum slicks it.

I let out a moan. “No, but I didn’t need to cum before using your cock.” I fix my eyes on his. “Now, finish me off.”

Both his hands are on my cock, stroking tightly. My hands are on the ground and I growl at him. I want to let him do the work that he has earned, but I also need to remind him that he is mine, and this is happening because I allow it. I thrust in his hands; I do it again, growling and after the third he stills his motion, letting me fuck them.

I lock eyes with him, gaze deeply into the storm raging in them. I read his need in those grays, the desire, the willingness to abandon everything he is for me, and that strokes a box I don’t care for. One that whispers I should tear him apart and remake him into someone who will obey me without thought.

I snarl and fuck those thoughts away. I don’t want him mindless. That box is a remnant of my father’s beliefs. Of what he tried to make of me and Justin. Bart is his own person. I will use him, but I will accept him as he is, not as I can make him.

A box explodes and, with a scream, I cum.

My body shakes, my breath is ragged. The emotion in Bart’s eyes is hot. The storm in them is raging. He wraps his arms around my neck and pulls himself up and kisses me.

His lips mash against mine and I taste cum on them. His tongue is in my mouth. I kiss him back. I need something. It’s a ball in my chest, demanding to explode, but the trigger isn’t there for me to activate.

He drops and the void where his lips were is too much. The glow from his box is all-encompassing, leaving the others a jumble. I’m down and kissing him hard. I bite his lip and draw blood. His moan makes my spent cock jerk between us. He wraps his head around my waist and humps.

I release his lips, not because I want to, but because even with all my training, the stones under my knees are digging into them uncomfortably. I stare in those eyes. I can lose myself in that storm. I want to—

“I—” My voice catches on the absence of what I want to say.

He raises an eyebrow. “Yes?” there is only the hint of expectation in his question.

I search for what should be there, but I do not find it. “I think we should shower, see to your injuries, then sleep.”

He hides most of the disappointment as he nods. I try to understand what he is disappointed about. This was amazing. His reactions tell me he loved what I did.

“We probably should.” There is no trace of it in his voice. “You wouldn’t want me to wither away from infection, would you?”

The comment triggers an unreasonable amount of worry. His box reacts to it and it is difficult to quiet them both. He can’t die of an infection here. Even if we don’t look after it now, he would once he got him. He might get sick, but he won’t wither away.

I stand and notice the line of cum on his chest, his neck, and the sheen on his lips.

“I guess you were pent up after all, from all that not jerking off.” He takes my hand.

I pull him to his feet. “I don’t get pent up.”

“You have to, after a while.”

I hold him as his legs shake from supporting him. I want to say no, but that is a lie. “It can take months. I’ll take care of it while I am in the city. Pay a guy so I can use him.”

“Pay a guy?” he looked me over, smiling. “You’re telling me they aren’t lining up and paying you to be used?”

“You seem to think most men enjoy being treated the way you like that I treat you.”

He winces as he takes steps and many of the cuts reopen. “I know not everyone knows what a great

catch you are, but you really shouldn't have to anymore."

I look at him. That need to say something pressing at me again. What I say isn't that, but it calms it somewhat.

"I don't need to anymore."

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