

Chapter Sixteen

The chapter opens with Cassian struggling with intense arousal after his encounter with Nesta the previous night. Despite multiple attempts to relieve his tension, he remains restless and preoccupied with thoughts of her. At breakfast, their interaction is charged with unspoken desire, as Nesta blushes and avoids his gaze while reading a romance novel. Cassian's attempts at casual conversation only heighten the tension, and he becomes acutely aware of his own physical reaction to her presence, making it difficult to focus on their upcoming training session.

Nesta is equally flustered, chastising herself for her awkward response about the book. She notices Cassian's discomfort and interprets his hasty exit as reluctance to acknowledge their mutual attraction. Despite her embarrassment, she resolves to maintain composure during training. When they meet in the training ring, Cassian adopts a professional demeanor, though Nesta catches a glimpse of his lingering desire. Their banter about core exercises and muscle comparisons lightens the mood, but Cassian is visibly startled when Nesta genuinely laughs, revealing a rare moment of vulnerability.

The training session quickly becomes a struggle for Nesta, who lacks the physical strength to perform the abdominal exercises Cassian demonstrates. His teasing remarks about her weakness frustrate her, but she refuses to back down. The dynamic between them shifts between playful rivalry and unspoken tension, as Cassian pushes her limits while Nesta defiantly challenges his expectations. Their exchanges reveal deeper layers of their relationship, blending physical exertion with emotional undercurrents.

By the end of the chapter, Nesta's exhaustion and Cassian's relentless training highlight the growing complexity of their connection. The physical demands of the session mirror their emotional struggles, as both characters grapple with their desires

and insecurities. The chapter closes with Nesta's determination to persevere, despite her frustration, leaving the reader anticipating how their relationship will evolve amidst the tension and unspoken attraction.

