

# Enslaved

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“That’ll be thirty dollars and twenty-five cents. Cash or card?”

I blink. “What?”

The store assistant gazes back at me. “Cash or card?”

I lower my eyes and take in my now empty basket beside a large brown bag filled to the brim.

“Cash.” I only ever deal with cash. I hunt, I kill, I take the thick envelope and get in my truck, leaving whichever alpha hired me to deal with the body. Or bodies.

Most of it goes toward motel rooms, gas, vodka, and diner food. And just when my wallet is getting flat, my cell phone rings, and then it’s time for the next job.

After I’ve handed two twenties to the cashier, I pocket the change before grabbing my groceries.

“Have a nice day,” he calls out as I head for the exit.

“Sure, whatever.”

I make it across the empty parking lot and have my hand on the truck door before I smell them. “Don’t you have plans? You know, a girl to see? Things like that?” I sigh.

“I take my responsibilities seriously,” Jonas’s voice stretches from the trees that border the edge of the parking lot, “and I told you what would happen if I found you still in town.”

Once I've deposited the groceries in the back seat, I turn to face him. "Right, I remember. An hour."

Jonas steps free from the forest and into the parking lot, two hulking figures trailing him. From the men's predatory stares spearing through me, it's clear that Jonas isn't messing around.

"So, we can do this the easy way or the hard way," he murmurs, drawing my attention from the unblinking slabs of pure muscle he brought with him.

I crack my knuckles. "Oh, the hard way. Most definitely the hard way." I raise an eyebrow. "Unless lamkeeping you from something."

"Like what?"

"You kissing Liam's ass?" I cock my head. "Or plotting to get him out of the way? It has to grate taking orders from the father and now the son. Maybe you'd like to be the one in charge for once."

His jaw tightens just enough that I know I've hit a sore spot. The two men behind him step forward, already reaching for their sweatpants, so I reach for my jeans since no clothes ever survive a shift. All they do is trap you as you change from one form to another. Not what you want going into a fight.

An engine roars as it pulls into the parking lot, flooding it with bright light, and making Jonas and his backup retreat a little into the forest.

Angling my head to the right, I narrow my eyes when a blue truck almost as filthy as mine parks up right beside me.

When the driver's door opens, I sigh when a familiar face grins at me. "Ah, got the munchies I see?" Bodie asks, as his gaze flicks over to the forest, "or am I disturbing something else?"

"You're not wanted," Jonas speaks before I can. "Leave, or you'll end up the same way."

When Bodie's smile widens, I start wondering if the craziness in Madden Grove is contagious. "And what way is that?"

Jonas steps back out into the parking lot. "In pieces. If you're lucky."

Darting a glance at Bodie, I wait for him to make the smart decision.

He slams his truck door shut and does the very opposite of smart, heading toward me with dark anticipation filling his eyes. “It’s been a while since I’ve been in a fight, but I guess—” His nose twitches at the same time mine does at something fragrant burning in the air. “What the hell is that? Incense, or—”

Frowning, I shift my focus to the far left corner of the parking lot. To where the scent is strongest. The lack of smoke only confirms what I already know. “Witch. A witch is casting a nasty spell.”

“And you know this how?” Bodie drawls.

“A long time ago, I ripped one to pieces before she could singe more than my tail with one similar.” I blink and my vision sharpens. My wolf’s eyes probe the dark shadows. “So it might be a good idea to—”

A burst of bright light, a furious growl, and I flinch. But a rapid glance reveals I’m not wearing any new burns on my clothes. Another confirms Bodie has escaped unharmed, but Jonas and his buddies...