

Enslaved

They haven't been so lucky.

I catch a bare hint of the blue-red flames they're fighting to put out as they sprint into the forest.

Why would a witch intervene?

My gaze returns to the left corner of the forest. There's no sign of a witch, but the familiar herb scent lingers. She's still there... somewhere.

"Hmm," Bodie shoots me a curious glance. "A wolf with a witchy friend. Never seen that before."

I snort. "Yeah, right." After waiting a little longer to see what this witch will do, her scent fades enough that I know she's leaving. With the day I've just had, I'm not in a hurry to go looking for more trouble tonight, so shaking my head, I turn to Bodie. "You were going to join the fight. Why?"

He shrugs. "Maybe I like a fight."

"If you have any intention of sticking around, I wouldn't antagonize the beta."

Bodie smiles, but I get the sense that it's surface-level only. "Oh, I'm just a drifter. I won't be here for long. I'll see you around." He lifts his hand in a wave as he heads for the grocery store.

"Doubt it," I mutter as I climb back into my truck.

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I've just pulled the truck to a stop outside the cabin when a blood-curdling scream cuts clean through the night. I'm out of the truck, sprinting toward it before I know what I'm doing, leaving the door open and the engine still running.

In seconds I'm at the back of the cabin. Just in time to grab a black-gray wolf by the tail as it lunges at Briar, who's dangling out of the window.

I swing the wolf away from her and let go, grunting at the satisfying meaty sound his body makes against a tree. Whether Jonas sent this shifter here to sniff around my

cabin, or the wolf picked up Briar's scent and took advantage of having a captive witch, I have no fucking clue.

The wolf scrambles back to his feet with a snarl. I stare him down. "Hands off."

When he takes a step closer, this time I'm the one showing him my teeth. You're a wolf right now, but I'm an alpha. I can still take you, and I don't even need to shift to do it.

He paces back and forth, not brave enough to venture any closer, but not ready to fuck off either. "If you want to fight," I say, "I'm ready whenever you are."

Step by step, the wolf edges further and further away.

I watch him go, long past the point when I lose sight of him. His scent lingers, and that's the biggest warning he's still there, still waiting for me to turn my back and he'll be on me in a heartbeat.

Long minutes later, his scent disappears and I swing back around. "Just what the hell kind of witch are you?" I grumble as I stalk toward Briar.

"A broken one," she mutters beneath her breath.

"What was that?" I ask, despite hearing her crystal clear.

"Nothing. Can you help me, please?"

For a second, I'm tempted to leave her there. Maybe then she'll tell me what I need to know about the witch who slaughtered my pack. But then I remember the crap she was spewing earlier.

All the blood rushing to her head is hardly going to help her talk sense, now is it?

After grabbing the window frame, I shove up.

Nothing happens.

I scowl at the top of her head. "What the hell did you do to the window?"

"I was trying to escape, and it got stuck."

"Who just admits to an escape attempt without even trying to lie?" I grumble, seizing the window again and shoving at it. It still doesn't budge.