

Enslaved

A low snarl reminds me why it might not be a good idea to antagonize this wolf. “Okay, fair enough. My parents' death is why I was there.”

He takes a long draw of beer. “To do what?”

I hesitate.

He growls, and I take a step back. “I don't want to tell you because you're going to kill me or throw me to the wolf outside.”

“The wolf is gone.”

“Why was he here? And what did he want because I thought—” My mouth snaps shut when Keane pushes off the counter and strides toward me, pausing just long enough to thump his beer bottle on the dining table as he passes it.

Abandoning Keane's bag of snacks in favor of backing up, I keep going until the refrigerator stops me.

He places both hands on either side of the door, caging me in, and leans into my face. “I'm not a patient person,” he murmurs. “In case you hadn't noticed.”

Despite the beer breath that wafts in my face, he doesn't smell bad. At all. He's lost the ashtray scent which clung to him earlier, and without it, he smells nice. Like nature and clean male sweat. “I gathered that. Most wolves aren't.”

His expression shifts so subtly that I almost miss it. “You learn that from Liam?”

I raise my eyebrow. “Liam? Alpha of Madden Grove?” I snort. “The only thing I learned from him is never to run because if I do, he'll chase me down and tear me apart.”

He cocks his head. “That why you were having a wet dream about him?”

A blush sears every inch of my skin, heating me from head to toe. The memory of what Keane was doing to me in my dream is so embarrassing with him staring into my eyes that I shift my focus to his ear. “No one outside of a teenage boy going through puberty has a wet dream,” I mutter, hoping to Goddess that he can't scent my arousal.

Silence.

It goes on for so long that I dart a glance at his eyes to find his gaze still piercing me. I get real busy focusing on his right ear. “Jeez,” I mutter as I duck under his arm, “you should blink or—”

A large hand presses firmly between my breasts, pinning me to the refrigerator.

My eyes are wide as I meet the intensity of his stare. “Talk, witch.”

I swallow hard. “About the wet dream I didn’t have, or about—”

He pulls the hand from my chest. I swallow hard as the skin ripples and I’m once again staring down my death at the sight of razor-sharp wolf claws, which he presses against my throat. It’s like being back in the alley all over again.

“Talk.”

“I killed my parents, okay?” I burst out.

His slow blink is the only sign I’ve surprised him. Before he accuses me of being crazy again, I start talking. Fast. “I didn’t mean to do it, but that’s what elemental witches do. The ones that control fire, anyway. Their power just sort of…” I flutter my fingers outward to mimic a balloon bursting.

“Explodes?” His expression is impossible to read.

“No.” I sigh. “Look, can you move the claws, please? I’ll talk, but it would be a lot less stressful and I won’t be too afraid to breathe.”

He doesn’t move.

“Please.” I wheedle, making my eyes big. “I promise I won’t try to escape again.”

“You won’t because you’re too afraid of getting stuck in the window again,” he snorts.

He’s not wrong.

But the claws retreat. He, however, stays put, continuing to lean most of his weight against me.

“Are you going to move?” I venture.