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My eyes snap to his. “What?”

He leans toward me. “There are more people who want us dead down there than just about anywhere else on earth. I will drive by and you will sit low in the seat. When we get to the grocery store, you will not get out of the truck and draw attention to yourself.”

“Why the grocery store?”

“Where else would you go to for gossip in town?”

He’s been away from Madden Grove for ten years, but it’s like he never left. I nod. “O’Neale’s Grocery.”

“O’Neale’s Grocery,” he echoes. “You will stay in the truck while I—” I open my mouth. When his eyes shift to wolf, I snap my mouth shut again. “You will stay in the truck while I find out what happened. Whatever part you stick out of the truck, I will rip it off. Arm, leg, head. Makes no difference to me.”

I gulp.

“Do you understand?” his voice is whisper-quiet, but I read how serious he is.

He means it. I’m dead if I even think of taking one foot out of his truck.

“I understand.”

“Then come on.”

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KEANE

I dart a glance at Briar slumped in the seat. “Lower.”

She turns with an argument brewing in her eyes. I stare back until she slumps further down with a heavy sigh. "I won't be able to see anything, because I'll be on the floor if I go any lower."

"The floor," I murmur as I slow the truck down as we approach Main Street, where the usually quiet town is quiet no longer. "Why didn't I think of that?"

Silence.

Good. She must understand how utterly reckless this idea of coming to town is. If the witches spot her, or if the wolves spot me...

Just drive through, Keane. The sooner you get this done, the sooner you can get out of danger.

More cars and trucks than I would have believed you could even find in Madden Grove line the full length of Main Street. But the one good thing out of all this is with the gathering tourists and locals staring at the remains of the tearoom, no one is looking at the road.

A whimper draws my gaze toward the passenger seat.

Despite my warning, Briar isn't slumped in the seat at all.

She has her face pressed against the window.

But I don't tell her to get down, not when I glimpse what's caught her attention.

Two firemen emerge from a still smoky building, and between them is a stretcher with a black plastic body bag.

Aunt Mel, I'm guessing.

When Briar's hand fumbles for the door, I put my foot down and get us the hell out of here before she gets us both killed.

Luckily, Briar isn't so far gone that she's willing to throw herself out of a moving truck, but the sobs wracking her body mean I have to stop soon.

Or maybe it's the mournful sounds my wolf is making.

I pull into the grocery store parking lot, thankfully empty since it seems like everyone must be back on Main Street.

