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“I knew you’d go to the tearoom if I stuck around long enough, and when I saw you in the truck, I followed.”

Keane warned me to stay down, but I’ve never been more glad that I didn’t, because if there was a time I needed a best friend, it’s now. “I’m glad you’re here.”

“Me too.”

“But you have to go, Sera.”

As expected, she pulls away with a frown furrowing her brow. “No. I’m here to help. No one is thinking. Everyone is too busy looking to point the finger at you to believe it’s someone else, so we have to do the thinking for them.”

“Sera...”

She glares. “No, it’s true. It’s why Layla Markham is still coven leader. She blamed Abigail for the Destin slaughter so she could stay coven leader when everyone started whispering that it should be Abigail, and not her. Now she’s blaming you for all these deaths because then she gets to look like she’s the protector of Madden Grove. Or whatever she wants everyone to believe.”

“Abigail?”

“She was going to be green witch coven leader because she was more powerful. But according to my parents, when Layla started whispering that Abigail was responsible for the Destin slaughter, well... she moved out of town and into the south wood. Everyone thought the wolves wouldn’t only turn on her if they found out she was responsible for wiping out a pack, that Liam would have the wolves wipe out the whole coven if she was in charge.”

My eyes widen. “You knew her?”

“I’d seen her around, and sometimes at the coven meetings, but no one has seen her for years. Not for ten years. It’s—” She stops so suddenly that I wait for her to continue. When she just stares at me, I poke her shoulder.

“What? What is it?”

Sera stares at me as if she’s seeing me for the first time. “It was in the same week. Maybe even a few days apart.”

“What was?”

“The Destin slaughter, your first spark, and the thing with Abigail and Layla.”

“I don’t understand.”

“It’s nothing. Just it suddenly hit me that they all happened at the same time.”

“It’s probably just a coincidence.”

“I don’t know, Briar. It is unusual.”

“Not really. Keane was saying he thinks the only person who could have killed the Destins was a powerful witch—a coven leader—so maybe it was Layla, you know, to pin something on Abigail.”

“That’s a lot to do just to stay coven leader, Briar. If it was killing a couple of people, maybe I could believe it. But an entire pack?”

“You said the position was important to her, and she thought Abigail might take it away from her. So it is possible, right?”

After a pause, Sera nods. “I guess. But if it’s going to be anyone, it would be Diana Calla. She’s nasty enough. Her daughters too.” She narrows her eyes. “And they got what was coming to them.”

“Sera!”

“It’s true. They were vicious, nasty, and—”

“They deserved to be blown up.” Keane’s rumble comes from directly behind me, and I jerk my head around to find him much closer than I thought he’d be.

He must have had clothes in his car because he’s back in his usual uniform of black jeans and a t-shirt. “Like I said. Time’s up. Let’s go.”

I glance over at Sera to find her, not unexpectedly glaring at Keane. “She’s not going anywhere.”

Keane grips my shoulder and tugs. “Yes, she is. And if you know what’s good for you, you’ll keep your nose out of it.”

Her mouth opens, but before this can turn into an argument, I get to my feet. “I’m going Sera. Whatever is happening in town means it makes sense I stick with Keane, for now at least. I’ll be okay, and we both know it’s not safe for me to stay in town. I don’t want Diana hitting your house thinking I’m there.”