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“Who is that guy?” I ask Keane as I slip into his truck.

“Just a drifter.”

My eyes go to the rearview mirror, and I watch Sera stalk away, closely followed by Bodie. “Well, I don’t know if he’s going to stay a drifter.”

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KEANE

I lead the way through the Madden Grove Wood. “Tell me about this witch in the south wood.”

She glances over at me. Since we left her friend Sera and Bodie, she’s been mostly silent. “Who told you about her?”

“A witch called Mara.” South of the Madden Grove Wood, the area that the witches have claimed as theirs, never stopped me from running where I wanted.

Hundreds of years ago, the lines dividing witches and wolves were more distinct. It never took much to anger a wolf into lashing out, and witches always believed we wolves were plotting to steal Madden Grove from them while they slept, so we carved up the town into ours and theirs.

But if there’s any difference between the north and south part of the wood, I’ve never been able to find it. Both areas are filled with the same trees, plants, and small forest animals scurrying about in the brush.

As we walk, I keep my attention focused on our surroundings, but there’s no magic in the air to suggest there’s a witch about.

I’ll give it fifteen minutes, then I’ll shift and sniff her out that way.

“I don’t know her.”

I dart a glance at Briar. Her eyes are still pain-filled, but she's trying to move past her grief. She's handling her loss a lot better than I ever did or could. "Long brown hair, brown eyes, a nasty scar from magic lessons with elementals."

Her face tightens a second before she glances away. "I don't know a witch called Mara."

"The burns were memorable," I add. "You'd remember them."

She shakes her head. "The only witch with burns on her face is..." She pauses. "Was Aunt Mel."

I study her for a while longer, because she's right. Back in the café, I was paying more attention to Briar Fenix than anyone else. But I didn't notice them. Other than the friend who's proven to be a threat that I'm going to have to watch my back around if we survive this, the other woman, Aunt Mel, had a red burn on the side of her face.

"How'd she get it?"

"Aunt Mel?"

"Yeah."

"Because of me." Her steps slow, and I slow with her.

"Explain."

"After my power exploded my house, Aunt Mel rushed over and—"

"How did she know to be there?"

Briar shrugs. "I don't know. Sometimes she came over after closing the café for tea."

"And was this after the café had closed?"

She shoots me an exasperated look. "I don't know. I don't remember. What does it matter if it was? She's dead." Her voice cracks at the end and she tears her gaze away, fixing it on a spot in the distance.

I study her profile as we continue through the forest. If we hadn't just watched the firemen carrying her body out of the café, I'd have thought Aunt Mel and Mara were the same person. I don't know how easy it would be to cast a spell to

change someone's appearance, but there's more I don't know about witches than I do.

"Tell me about your magic lessons with the elementals."