

Forever in the Past and Forever in the Future by Neener

Chapter 1

Most people don't even remember the packhouse has a dungeon. I do though. I have a little room in the back that used to be a solitary confinement cell. It smells of old piss, vomit, and blood. You get used to it. I have a cot and an old tattered blanket to keep me warm. I even scored a lamp out of the trash. It still works, so I have light to do my homework. Home sweet home and all that jazz, right? I mean, at least I'm not a rogue.

Oh yeah, I should introduce myself. My name is Iokaste Latmus, but I go by Kas. No one calls me Iokaste except for teachers on the first day of school. I'm a werewolf in the Silver Moon pack. Since I'm an orphan, I'm not

completely sure how old I am but pretty sure I'm sixteen. Also, I'm an omega which means I'm a servant. My job is to make the meals for the werewolves who live in the packhouse. Between making breakfast and dinner for over a hundred wolves, cleaning up after them, and

restocking the pantries of the ranked members' apartments on the third and fourth floors, I do normal teenager stuff. Except, I don't really have a lot of spare time to do normal teenager stuff. So homework, homework is the extent of my normal teenager stuff.

Right now, it's eleven-thirty at night. I'm putting the finishing touches on my English essay when I hear the door of the dungeon slam open. Great. Now what did I do? It doesn't take much. Alpha Graham Connors is an alcoholic. It's really difficult for werewolves to get drunk,

which means you have to drink really heavily to feel the effects. Which means he probably had a fight with Luna Caroline about his drinking. Which means she locked him out of their room. Which means he has come down to take out his anger on me. Just an average Tuesday night in the packhouse.

The sharp smell of whiskey hits my nose well before he appears in front of my door. I know the drill. I'm already on my feet waiting for him.

Oh crap oh crap oh crap. I'm thinking in my mind.

"Alpha Graham, what can I do for you?" I ask with my eyes looking at the floor. I keep my hands clasped in front of me, trying to look as small as possible.

Without a word, a whiskey bottle whizzes past my ear and smashes against the wall above my cot. I flinch and can't help but start to tremble and hug myself. We're beyond 'Oh crap', we're in 'Oh shit' territory now.

Whatever is about to happen it's going to be worse than usual.

He lunges forward and grabs me by the throat with both hands. I feel tears coming to my eyes as the lack of oxygen turns the edges of my vision dark. I desperately claw at his hands, trying to escape his grip but it's no

use. He picks me up by the neck so I'm at face level with him. His eyes are pitch black indicating his wolf Ruckus is at the surface. His breath stinks from drinking and his face is red with anger.

I start gagging and choking from the lack of oxygen. Without warning, he throws me across the room as if I weigh nothing. My body slams against the wall and I land on my back on the cot. The shards of the broken bottle pierce the skin on my back through my thin t-shirt. The whiskey makes the cuts burn. I try to muffle a scream as the pain sears through me. He comes across the room and picks me up roughly by the hair. I feel the shards of glass cutting deeper as he pulls me up.

He slaps me as hard as he can before throwing me to the ground. He kicks me in the gut and stomps on my back over and over. The glass bits are grinding deeper into my back. I can feel blood soaking through my shredded shirt. I don't dare move and make him even madder. I feel my ribs snap when his foot makes contact. One of his kicks lands on my jaw. I feel a sickening snap. Rattle in my brain. The metallic taste of blood instantly fills my mouth.

Alpha Graham has been using me as his personal punching bag for years, but this was way more intense than it has ever been before. Usually, he slaps me a few times, then whips me until I'm bleeding and raw. In the past couple of years, he

started dipping the whip in wolfsbane, which makes me heal slower, so now I have gnarly scars across my back and arms.

"Apha Gahm, sthoph. Pleesh," I manage to eke out. My voice is small and garbled between the broken jaw and blood pouring out of my mouth. He abruptly stops and walks out of the room. He comes back a moment later with the whip and starts lashing my back relentlessly.

The whip is dripping with wolfsbane. The lashes,

combined with the glass shards still in my back, combined with the wolfbane is too much.

My vision turns blurry and I black out.

Blackness and numbness surround me. Is this what being dead is like? It's peaceful, but a little bit boring. At least I don't have to feed the pack. Oh dang, I didn't get a chance to turn in that English essay. It was a good one too. The constant soft beeps are soothing. I don't know how long I've been dead, but I feel like I want to open my eyes, ready to take on the afterlife.

After what seems like forever, I'm able to open my eyes and find I'm alone in a soft comfortable bed in a brightly lit, clean room. This is the afterlife? Maybe this is some sort of waiting area, but where's the lobby? Is there a receptionist? My mind slowly becomes more clear and I realize I'm not dead. I'm in the pack hospital.

I need to leave before the Alpha finds me outside the dungeon. I try to get up but I can barely move my body. Every move causes excruciating pain. I start to panic, making the beeps in the room become faster. Oh, I'm hooked up to a bunch of machines. I try to figure out how to unhook them so no one hears the noises. Too late, I hear people in the hallway getting closer. I try to sit up. I need to ignore the pain. I have to escape. I slowly slide off the side of the bed. My legs were wobbly. The tubes and wires sticking out of me preventing me from getting too far.

The door opens and the pack doctor comes in with a nurse. The doctor is an older man. He has black hair that's turning gray on the sides. The nurse is young with blond curly hair pulled back into a ponytail.

"Ah, Kas. You're awake. Let's get you back in bed, shall we?" The doctor says gently. He and the nurse come to either side of me and reach out to hold my arms. A deep growl escapes my chest.

"Don't touch me," I snap, shaking them off. My voice is scratchy and raw and my mouth feels like a thousand needles are poking into it.

"It's alright, Kas. No one is going to hurt you here. We're trying to help you heal. Let's get you back to bed and get you a drink of water," the doctor raises his hands in surrender.

I look at him hesitantly before accepting their help back into the bed. The nurse hands me a cup of water with a straw. It hurts the whole lower half of my face to drink, but the water feels good on my throat.

The doctor sits in the chair beside the bed as the nurse checks my vitals and starts messing with the tubes and wires attached to me.

"Kas, you had surgery to remove hundreds of shards of glass from your back, we also had to reset some ribs, your jaw, and you had a lot of wolfsbane in your blood. We gave you a transfusion to clear it from your system

so you could heal," the doctor explains, "You're lucky you didn't die."

Sure about that last part, doc? I think to myself.

"When the pack realized breakfast had not been prepared, Beta Tate went to get you and found you on the ground in your...uh...room," he looks at me with

sympathy, "Kas, who did this to you? It's a crime that could be grounds for banishment from the pack. Based on the scarring, this isn't the first time you've been attacked."

I can't answer him. I stare at my hands on my lap quietly. How can I tell him Alpha Graham is the one who caused this? There's no way he'd believe me, even if he did, what are they going to do? Banish the Alpha? Fat chance of that. I decide my best move is to just shake my head no. I don't want to get kicked out of the pack for lying. I have nowhere to go. I would be a rogue.

"Okay. Let's move on to the next question. When do you turn seventeen?" He looks at papers inside his folder.

"I-I don't know exactly, sir," I say honestly. He looks at me with a furrowed brow. He glances at the nurse and asks her to give us privacy for a few minutes. Oh crap, am I in trouble? I just woke up, I don't know what I could have done while I was sleeping. She finishes what she's doing and leaves the room.

"You don't know your birthday, Kas?" he asks, confused.

"M-my father brought me here when I was a baby. He was a rogue. Alpha Graham, well...he..." I feel my face turning hot with embarrassment. My hands tremble and tears threaten to escape my eyes. I didn't think I would have to tell this story to the doctor. I thought everyone already knew.

My father was a rogue. Alpha Graham murdered him for coming onto pack territory without permission. They didn't realize he was carrying a baby until they unzipped his jacket and saw I was tucked inside. It was a miracle I survived. Since I was just a baby, they couldn't just get rid of me but they didn't know anything about me. I was wrapped in a blanket that had the name 'Iokaste' embroidered on it. So, that is what they called me. My father could have actually been a kidnapper for all I know. The only reason they gave me the last name Latmus is because after they killed my father, they looked through his wallet to identify him. The only form of ID he had was a library card that said Andy Latmus on it. I've tried an

internet search for his name on the computer in the school library before. Nothing comes up in the search.

“You don’t need to finish, I know what happened to your father.”

“Well, after that...happened...Luna Caroline took me in until I was old enough to start school. Then she moved me into the dungeon. I’ve kinda been on my own since then. I never found out when my actual birthday is. To be honest, you’re the first person who has ever asked. I mean, I guess I’m sixteen. My wolf hasn’t woken up yet.”

The doctor nods, looking at me with pity. Almost like he actually cares. He asks me a few more questions about my medical history, but there’s nothing to really speak of. I don’t remember ever being treated by a doctor before.

“I see,” he closes the folder and tucks his pen into his shirt pocket, “Well, I know you haven’t had a chance to look in the mirror yet, but when you do, you may find

you look a little different. Don’t be alarmed. I believe it’s a sign that your wolf is starting to wake up. I’ve done as many tests as I could think of. It is not medically

related.”

I look at him with confusion, “Y-yes, sir.” I assume he means I’m healing faster but, why did he need to warn me? Why not just tell me?