

# Forever in the Past and Forever in the Future Chapter 141

## Chapter 141

### Chapter 9

#### Bronx's POV

Mrs. Miller, our head chef, has her staff bring burgers and fries out to the garden gazebo next to the pool. I didn't even have to ask, she knows it's my favorite comfort food combination. She even adds a cup of chocolate pudding on my plate like she did when I was a little kid. It all looks and smells delicious, but I have no appetite.

I just feel numb inside. All I can think about is Kas. Her mesmerizing violet eyes that practically glow and her glittery silver hair that she always fusses over, even though I think it always looks perfect. Her sweet laugh that makes my heart beat faster every time I hear it. And the adorable little growl she lets out when she's frustrated about a recipe she's testing doesn't come out the way she wants. What if I never get to see her beautiful face or get to hold her in my arms again? What if I never get to hear that giggle or her melodic voice call my name again? Will the last memory I have of her be losing my temper?

Goddess, help me.

I'm not sure how long I sit there staring at the uneaten food. It may have been five minutes or five hours. Eventually, Milo moves my plate away and sits down beside me, pulling me out of my thoughts. I rub my hands across my face and sigh with a frustrated growl when I feel his hand on my shoulder. I look at the ground, avoiding his gaze. I can't bear to look him in the eye right now.

"Bronx, we're gonna find her. You gotta have faith," he reassures me, "It feels like you're giving up, man. Asking for help is not defeat. Think of it more like pulling together additional troops."

"Milo's right. You didn't feel your mate bond break, and we didn't feel our pack bond break with Kas."

She's alive out there, Bronx. We just have to figure out where. Knowing Kas, she is fighting for her life to get back to you," Reggie chimes in.

I look up at his icy blue eyes when he mentions Kas by name, and he continues, "Reaching out to the human media outlets is the right thing to do. Think about it. After your honeymoon and how successful the bakery has been, everyone knows who she is, anyway. Ashley says the paparazzi have already started theorizing on their websites

why she hasn't been at work all week." "Cut it out, Reggie. You know she hates that kind of attention," I sigh helplessly.

"It's not me, man. Social media is already buzzing. How will they react when they find out the wife of Bronx Mason is missing? They are gonna run far and wide with it. No offense, but Kas sticks out like a sparkly silver thumb in a crowd of pinkies. Someone has to know where she is. Once they broadcast your message, everyone will be looking for her. And at this point, the more eyes, the better," he tries to talk sense into me.

Milo takes control of the conversation now, "Bronx, we need you to think of this as a battle. For all we know, it is a battle...or will be..."

His eyes get a little starry and a smile crosses his face as he thinks about getting to be in a battle again. He blinks a couple times as he comes back to his senses, "Sorry, I got distracted. What I'm trying to say is, we need you to fight for your mate. Your Luna. Our Luna. This is not the warrior Bronx we all know and cower from. You need to get mad. We want the moody, growly, settle for nothing less than perfection, ruthless Alpha leader we know you are, to come back. No one is denying how much you love Kas. We know you're hurting without her. Reggie and I are here to support you behind the scenes, but for the pack and the public, you need to put on the show."

He stands up and starts pacing, gesturing with his hands as he talks as he gets excited, "You need to be the guy people aren't afraid to be afraid of, because they all know they had better be. Be the powder keg people are worried about standing too close to. Whoever has Kas needs to know you mean business. You need to go out there, kick 'em in the nuts, and make them shit their pants through the television screen. Make someone call and beg you to take Kas back before the end of the day."

I lean back in my seat while I watch Milo. He has stopped pacing and is standing in front of me with his arms crossed in front of him. His steel-gray eyes are full of a best friend's worry, but there is also a sternness that he knows I need from my Beta when I am unsure of myself. In their own eccentric way, he and Reggie always know how to give me the best pep talks. I'm grateful to have them at moments like this.

"you guys are right," I say. Their little sermon has worked because something inside my mind begins to stir. It feels like a tinderbox sparking. I can't just lay back and cry like a baby because Kas is missing. I need to make whoever has her pay for even thinking they could take my mate with no consequences.

I stand up and roll my shoulders like I'm readying myself for a fight, "Enough with the pity party. I need to go upstairs and pick out a suit and figure out what I want to say tomorrow. Fuck what the PR team's script says. We're doing this my way."

"That's my boy," Milo says, clapping me on the back with a huge smile, "Wear one of the eye patches Kas has given you."

“Good idea,” I nod and stand up, feeling much better than I did when I came outside, “Thank you guys. I don’t know where I’d be without you.”

“Six feet under,” Reggie laughs, “Come on, let’s get these dishes back to Mrs. Miller.”

I collect the plates to take back to the kitchen. I already know I’m going to get scolded for not eating, so I mentally prepare an apology to Mrs. Miller.

As we are stepping out of the gazebo, the energy in the air changes, like it’s supercharged with electricity. The hairs on the back of my neck all stand up and Saint starts pacing in my head.

“Do you feel that?” I ask Milo and Reggie, making sure I’m not going crazy. I feel my fangs and claws extend as Saint reacts to the change as well.

“Yeah,” Reggie says, looking around. Just like me, he and Milo’s eyes turn black with fangs and claws extended. They take defensive stances. Standing guard in front of me in case there is a surprise attack. My heart begins pounding in my chest, causing me to stumble forward. The plates fall to the ground, shattering into a thousand pieces. I grab Milo’s shoulder for support. My entire chest feels like it’s going to explode. A fear that is not mine overwhelms me. It can only come from Kas.

“Alpha! What’s wrong?!” Milo growls, looking around for the attacker.

“It’s Kas! She’s scared,” I groan, clutching my chest as my heart goes wild.

“Our mate,” Saint whimpers as he paces in my mind, “Help her.”

“I don’t know where she is or I would, buddy,” I try to calm him down through my own increasing anxiety and pain.

“She’s coming. Help her,” he says more urgently. He doesn’t sound like his usual self. He almost sounds like he’s scared. Saint isn’t scared of anything. Great, now I am worried about Kas and Saint.

Out of nowhere, the water in the pool bubbles and steams like it is boiling. A soft white light forms in the deep end and gradually starts growing brighter. The ground around the pool shakes violently, practically knocking Reggie off his feet. He jumps back up and tentatively steps forward to the edge of the pool. “what the Hell?” he asks, to no one in particular. His voice is full of confusion.

I look up, still using Milo to support me, to see what Reggie is looking at. The water is roiling and splashing over the edges onto the cement. The soft glow grows wider and brighter at the deep end of the pool. As it gets brighter, Reggie tilts his head.

“Guys? You need to see this. I think it’s a portal,” He calls out to Milo and me.

We step forward to see what he is looking at. Sure enough, there is a large circular light emanating from the bottom of the deep end of the pool. We can feel the heat being generated from the surface of the water. Suddenly, the light gets so bright that we have to shield our eyes and look away to avoid being blinded. The heat coming off the water is searing now. It’s like an atomic bomb going off underwater. All three of us step back to avoid getting burned by the steam.

As fast as it started, the light dissipates, the ground stops shaking, and the water stops boiling. It’s replaced by the sounds of water thrashing and a woman’s high pitched screaming.

“HELP!” I hear the familiar voice shriek, garbled by water, “HELP ME!”

We look back at the pool to see a small woman struggling to keep her head above water. Her violet eyes are wide with terror as she chokes on water. She tries to reach for us but quickly sinks beneath the surface. The purple aura is glowing around her brighter than I have ever seen.

“Kas?” Reggie says in awe of the impossible sight. One thought dominates my slow brain as I process that I am actually seeing her in the water: Kas can’t swim.

## **Forever in the Past and Forever in the Future Chapter 142**

### **Chapter 142**

#### **Chapter 10**

Without a second thought, I dive in the water. As my feet leave the ground, time seems like it slows down, almost stopping. Just as suddenly as it slows, it speeds up to triple speed, then back to normal. I feel like I’m being jerked back and forth on a wooden roller coaster. The sensation is disorienting but I can’t move to stop it. As the speed of time keeps fluctuating, I realize Kas is instinctively trying to save herself by using her powers, but she’s freaking out so she can’t control them.

As I am stuck in mid-air, another concern comes to mind. When Kas gets too stressed out, she has premonitions. When that happens, she turns catatonic. Sometimes it’s for hours at a time. It’s unnerving to watch her go through it. Stuck in her own mind, watching traumatic events that haven’t happened yet. If I am frozen in mid-air and she turns catatonic, she is definitely going to drown and I won’t be able to do anything but watch it happen.

I watch helplessly from above as she slides completely underwater, desperately trying to kick and paddle. As she sinks, time finally stabilizes, and I hit the water. I pull myself down to the bottom of the pool and grab her by the waist. She is still trying to struggle, but barely. I push off the bottom and kick as hard as I can until her head is above the surface. She sucks in as much of a breath as she can while she wraps herself tightly around me. She keeps coughing and gagging on the water, still trying to call out for help. I keep one arm secure around her while I use the other to get us back to the side of the pool.

Besides her violet aura glowing brightly and not being able to control time like she normally can, the surge in her energy is making her hands blistering hot on my back.

As I grip the edge of the pool, Milo reaches out for Kas to help her get out.

“Milo! Be careful! Her hands are burning up,” I warn. He gives me a little nod of understanding.

“I got you, Little Sister,” he reassures her. He reaches out and takes her by the armpits instead of her hands and tries to lift her out of the water, but she won’t let go of me. I carefully pry her arms and legs from around me, reassuring her she is safe, as he pulls her up.

As soon as her feet are on dry land, she turns to see Milo is the one holding her. She becomes hysterical all over again and wraps her arms around Milo while Reggie gently places a towel over her.

A painful look crosses Milo’s face as his back burns from her touch, but he hugs her back anyway. As he does, I can smell burning flesh. I need to get her off of him before she really does some damage.

“You’re okay now, Kas. Look, Bronx is right here and Reggie. See? Lenora and Ashley are coming too,” his voice cracks from the pain as he soothes her. In the distance, Lenora, Ashley, and the pack doctor are running toward us from the back door of the packhouse.

“Kas?” I climb out of the pool and I sit on my knees. I reach my hand out for her, but I don’t know what kind of mental state she is in right now. Does she even want to see me? Does she want to be comforted by me? I don’t want to make things worse.

She pulls her face away from Milo’s chest, pushing her hair out of her eyes, and looks at me like she is just realizing I am there.

“Bronx?” Kas’s sweet voice is scared and shaky. A complicated look comes over her face, as if she doesn’t believe she is actually seeing me. My heart thuds in my chest, worried that she won’t take my hand. That she won’t want to be with me. After what seems like an eternity, she lets go of Milo and throws herself into my arms.

“Don’t let me go, Bronx. Don’t let me go,” she cries into my chest. I fold my arms tightly around her and breathe a sigh of relief. The sparks of our mate bond are more powerful than ever.

“Don’t worry, Kas. I’ll never let you go again, Baby,” I whisper as I settle her into my lap. My skin is blistering on my ribs under her hands. I close my eyes and concentrate. I don’t want to let her know she is hurting me. It doesn’t matter how bad it hurts, she’s back, and I’m not letting her go. °

Reggie and the doctor finally kneel next to us. The doctor is huffing to catch his breath, looking in disbelief at Kas in my arms.

“The doctor is here, Kas. Are you hurt?” Reggie leans forward, addressing Kas carefully.

“I don’t know,” she whimpers from under the towel she’s wrapped in.

I feel a towel being draped over me. I look up to see Lenora and Ashley with confused looks on their faces when they realize Kas is in my arms.

The doctor kneels next to me and quietly asks permission to examine Kas. I motion to give me just a minute.

I unwrap my arms from around her and whisper softly in her ear, “Kas, can the doctor check you out? We want to make sure you’re not hurt.”

“A-am I home? The lady that looks like Lenora said if I-I drank from the cup, I could go home,” she hiccups as she calms down in my arms. Her voice is small and shaky. It reminds me of when we first found her.

“You’re home, Kas. You’re safe now. I need you to concentrate and pull some energy away from your hands, okay?” I try not to grimace as I make my request.

She looks at me, confused for a moment, then looks down at the blisters she has inadvertently created on my chest.

“Oh, my Goddess! Bronx, I’m so sorry!” she blurts out when she realizes what she has done. She pulls her hands away and tucks them against her own body like a mummy.

“It’s okay, Kas. Saint will heal me. Let’s get you to the hospital wing and get you checked out. Alright?” I say to her gently as I push the rest of her hair out of her face.

“Okay, but stay with me?” she sniffs.

“Of course, Baby. I’ll be damned if I’m letting you out of my sight again,” I kiss her forehead as I hold her tightly. 5

“Alpha, we need to get the Luna to the hospital as soon as possible to make sure she hasn’t ingested poison,” the doctor speaks softly but urgently in my ear.

I pick Kas up in my arms and carry her to the hospital wing. “Ashley, make sure the film crew is still here at nine a.m. No script necessary. Someone just put a price on their own head for this and I’m making sure the message is crystal clear.”

## **Forever in the Past and Forever in the Future Chapter 143**

### Chapter 143

#### Chapter 11

The doctors run every test they can think of but can’t find anything wrong with Kas other than the fact that she’s exhausted. They determine that she didn’t ingest known poisons. Thank the Goddess for that. They attribute the exhaustion to using so much energy when she almost drowned in the pool.

Based on how much weight she lost since the last time she had a checkup, the doctor doesn’t think she has had anything to eat in the four days she was missing. I try to convince her to eat or drink anything. She appeases me by drinking a few sips of water, but pushes away any food we try to give her. She won’t even take a bite of a banana, which is her favorite. When I found Kas two years ago, she was severely underweight from not being allowed to eat regularly. It took weeks before she could adjust to a normal diet. Since then, she has become a ravenous eater. Never turning down a meal, always snacking on veggies ora piece of fruit.

“Come on, Kas. Just a few bites of toast, at least. A little something in your stomach might kick start your appetite. Please,” I beg her.

“I’ll eat when I’m hungry, Bronx,” she insists, gently pushing the plate of toast away.

“Okay, how about a protein shake, just enough to get some calories in you?” I try to offer an alternative.

She just scrunches up her nose at the idea and shakes her head.

“Kas, we’re worried about you. You’ve lost almost ten pounds in four days. I can’t stand to see you lose more,” I stroke her cheek while I confess my concern.

“I’m fine, Bronx. If I wasn’t, I would tell you. You know that,” she says with a promise.

“Give her a rabbit,” Saint huffs, also frustrated that his mate won’t eat. |

“A rabbit?”

“Yeah, that’s what Lex hunts for when she’s hungry. I can go out and find one right now and bring it to her,” he offers.

“Let’s hold off on raw meat while she is in human form, buddy. But I appreciate the offer.”

“Have it your way,” he shrugs and goes to lie down in the back of my mind. I can sense that he is still paying close attention to make sure Kas is alright. 3

Kas places her hand on top of mine and leans into my palm. There is something more in her eyes, but I can’t place it. Something more primal, like she has somehow tapped into a more wild part of her essence. I can sense her emotions have more depth to her already ancient soul. When I look at her, I feel like I could fall into the violet pools of her eyes and be content for the rest of my life.

She is shocked to hear she was missing for four days. Even weirder than that, Kas says she can’t remember anything except for a woman with red eyes and a Lenora look-alike having her drink out of an old cup. Reggie and I try to press her for more details, but she doesn’t have any. Only that she was in a dark room and a woman who looked like my sister asked her to drink out of an old metal goblet. She doesn’t remember the woman with red eyes saying anything. It isn’t much to go on but Reggie goes to do research on famous enchanted goblets to see if he can find any pictures Kas can recognize. I ask Milo to look into creatures who have red eyes.

To be on the safe side, the doctor and I convince Kas to stay in the hospital overnight for observation. She agrees under the condition that I’m allowed to stay with her. Of course I agree. How could I not? They would have to drag me out of that room. °

After a couple hours of people coming in and out to check on Kas, things finally settle down and she can close her eyes. Seeing her finally be able to relax gives me a sense of relief.

The quiet is interrupted by a mind link from James, “ Alpha. Sorry for the interruption. Is it true? Is the Luna back?” |

“Yeah, she’s back, James. We’re keeping her in the hospital wing for the night for observation.”

“Thank the Goddess! Delilah wants to come see her. Can she come now or should I have her wait until the morning?”

“You know Delilah is always welcome. Have her come now. We are having trouble getting Kas to eat. Maybe she has something that can help?”

James chuckles, “I am sure she has something in that bag of tricks. We will be there shortly.”



Delilah is James's mate and Kas's business partner at the bakery. James met her when he and Marco were guarding Kas during an extended stay at a witch's coven. She and Kas are also best friends. They care for each other so much; it is almost like they are siblings. There is nothing one wouldn't sacrifice for the other. Delilah also happens to be a powerful witch and talented potion master.

While Kas insists her abilities are not magic, we have found that magic has helped when things go haywire with her. It was the reason she went to the Coven for training in the first place. She and Delilah still go every six months to visit and get themselves refreshed. Having Delilah available when Kas is in need has been invaluable on more than one occasion. There is a light knock at the door. Kas is finally sleeping peacefully. I want to let her sleep, but I know it would upset her if I told her Delilah had come, but I didn't wake her. I brush her bangs out of her face and kiss her forehead before going to open the door.

Delilah is on the other side with tears in her big blue eyes. James is standing behind her, looking a bit anxious, holding what looks like an old timey doctor's bag. Delilah keeps potions in there. While we have an agreement that she is not allowed to perform most magic on pack territory, we occasionally make exceptions if the need should arise.

"Alpha, is she alright? Can I please see her?" The thin woman asks. Her spindly fingers wipe tears away from her dark blue eyes. Her light brown hair is in a ponytail and it looks like there is some cake batter on the side of her face.

"Yeah, she seems to be okay. We just have her here to be on the safe side, Delilah. She's sleeping, but I know she will be happy to see you. Come on in," I whisper and smile gratefully at her.

Delilah's eyes turn from dark blue to bright ocean blue in the blink of her eye as her mood brightens. She takes the bag from James and quietly pads across the room. James comes in and stands at the back of the room with me.

"Sorry, Alpha. I couldn't keep her away. She was in the middle of making a wedding cake and everything," James apologizes quietly for the interruption.

"No, it's okay, James. I am glad she's here. Kas will be happy to see her," I reassure him. I tell him what the doctors say about her weight loss and her lack of appetite. He looks at Kas with concern. He remembers what it was like when she first came to Blood River as well.

I look over when I hear Kas squeal with happiness. She and Delilah are giving each other a big hug. They both have tears of joy in their eyes. Delilah sits on the bed with Kas, chatting excitedly while she opens her bag. Kas tells her the little she can remember about her ordeal. She listens intently before waving for James and me to come to Kas's bed side. +

“Alpha Bronx Mason, if it’s alright with you, I am going to give Kas a solution of herbs,” she uses my full name and title to help invoke her magic once I give her permission, “There isn’t much to it really... some custard apple, gentian, and dandelion root. Just some basic things to help with her appetite.”

“If you think it will help, then by all means, Delilah, please go ahead,” I nod in approval. As I finish speaking, the energy in the air changes. Delilah smiles and gets to work.

James leans on the railing of the bed and chats with Kas while Delilah mixes her potion. I notice he has a smile on his face, clearly glad she is doing well, but there is a slight furrow on his brow as he talks to her. Delilah murmurs under her breath as she adds concoction changes from green to bright orange to clear. She finally looks satisfied with the result and smiles before handing it to Kas.

James steps back for a moment while Delilah explains to Kas how the potion will make her feel.

“Alpha, something seems off,” he murmurs next to me, “Did you notice it? It’s something with her eyes.”

“Yeah. I can’t pinpoint what it is though,” I nod, “We can figure it out once we get some food into her.”

He nods in silent agreement. We stand back and watch as Kas takes the cup from Delilah and sniffs it. She suddenly looks reluctant to drink it.

“What’s the matter, Baby?” I ask. I step forward and take her other hand in mine. The sparks from our mate bond are back to being comforting and not overwhelming.

“T-it’s just,” she struggles to find the words to explain, “What if I disappear again?”

“Kas, Delilah would never give you a potion that would hurt you. She loves you. She is trying to help. How about this, I’ll hold your hand the entire time? But I’m sure you will not go anywhere, except maybe Mrs. Miller’s pantry from drinking that potion,” I smile at her, “The three of us will be right here just in case something goes wrong, okay?”

“Okay,” she smiles back, looking a little better about drinking the potion.

She throws her head back and drinks the liquid down in one gulp like a shot of liquor, then hands the glass back to Delilah.

“How do you feel?” Delilah asks as she puts the herbs back into her bag.

Kas hiccups a little. There is a slight look of concern on her face, “Fine, I think?”

“You think?” Delilah questions. Now she has a look of concern on her face, too.

“Yeah. Um...Delilah, could you get off the bed for a minute, please?” Kas asks with a little urgency in her voice. She lets go of my hand and pulls the covers off of herself. She starts to look a little pale. 1

“What’s wrong, Kas? Do you want me to get the doctor?” I look into her eyes trying to gauge what is happening with her. |

James helps Delilah off of the bed but then suddenly pulls her back quickly, sensing something is wrong. I look back at Kas and see her eyes are pitch black. A look crosses her face that is a mix of anger and pain. Oh no...now what?

## **Forever in the Past and Forever in the Future Chapter 144**

### Chapter 144

#### Chapter 12

“Kas? What’s going on? Talk to me, Baby,” I urge as her eyes flicker from black to purple to black.

She looks straight at me, eyes turning back again, and gives me an angry snarl. Her fangs and claws extend as the snarl turns into a deep growl. She crouches all fours with a pained expression.

“Lex? Lex, it’s Bronx. What’s wrong with Kas?” I put my hands up, reluctant to get too close to the angry wolf trying to take over Kas’s body.

I watch as Kas struggles to take control, but it’s a losing battle. Her flickering eyes look wild and out of control. I have never seen her like this. I’m not sure how to react.

“Delilah, get out of here!” James warns, as he puts himself between his mate and Kas.

Delilah is staring slack jawed at her best friend’s internal battle when James’s voice startles her out of her gawking. She grabs her bag and scurries out the door, closing it behind her.

“Lex, no!” Kas’s yell turns into a howl. Before James or I can react, Kas begins to shift. Her clothes rip away from her body as she expands and grows. Black fur sprouts from her skin. Where Kas was just crouching on all fours, her giant black wolf is now standing, trying to get her footing on the hospital bed.

I look in awe at my wolf mate. I always forget how stunningly beautiful she is with her jet black fur and violet eyes. Even in wolf form, I can still smell Kas’s fresh rain and lilac scent. It’s strong, just a little muskier and completely intoxicating. As I admire my

beautiful wolf mate, I can't deny the urge to be closer to her. I lean forward and slowly wrap my arms around her, burying my face into the thick fur around her neck. I feel her lean down and give the side of my neck a quick lick.

"She's so beautiful," Saint swoons.

"Tell me about it," I agree, getting lost in Lex's ebony coat.

"Alpha...you may want to back up...", I hear James warn behind me.

I look up just in time to see Lex's eyes flash red, then back to violet. That's a new one. I slowly unwrap my arms from around her and back up from the startling sight.

"Lex, are you okay? I-Is Kas okay?" I carefully back up with my hands out to the side, showing I mean her no harm until I am side by side with James.

Lex casually hops off the bed as if it's the most natural thing in the world and walks to the door. She nudges the handle for someone to open it for her.

"You better give her a rabbit," Saint chimes in. 3

"Saint, be serious. A few hours ago, our mate just appeared out of nowhere in the middle of the pool. She almost drowned. And now her eyes just turned red. She needs to spend the night in the hospital wing, not go chasing after rabbits."

"Fine. Don't believe me," he huffs.

A deep growl rumbles, making the whole room shake. Lex is standing by the door impatiently, waiting for someone to open it. She nudges the handle with her nose and huffs at me. I look at James, who just shrugs.

"I guess open the door. What other choice do we have? Shift and try to fight her?"

He's got a point. I oblige by opening the door a crack. Lex doesn't need an invitation, she's the kind of lady who gets what she wants. As soon as it's open, she squeezes her way through, looks both ways down the hall, then takes off running like a bat out of Hell. "ELEXIS! Where are you going?! Get back here now!" I yell, running after her. Trying to slip off my shoes and shirt as I go. James is hot on my heels doing the same. We are losing ground. We see people yelling and getting out of Lex's way as she barrels haphazardly through the packhouse toward the front entrance.

I mind link Milo, Reggie, and Marco, "Guys, we have a situation. Lex is loose in the packhouse."

"Lex? You mean Kas," Milo responds.

"No, I mean Lex. Get your asses downstairs."

James and I get to the main foyer of the packhouse to see Lex pacing by the door. Milo and Reggie make it to the landing of the stairs and look at us with shock.

Everyone on the main level is too scared to get close to Lex to open the door. She lets out a frustrated whine as she backs away from the door. James and I finish stripping down to our underwear just as Lex bursts through the glass of one of the front windows and is gone into the night.

“Again? What the fuck. Lex?” James mutters. It isn’t the first time Lex has broken through a plate-glass window, but I sure hope it will be the last. We look at each other, knowing that we are in for a serious chase as we each shift. Saint and James’s wolf, Reaper, leap through the window into the night after her. Ghost and Crusher are hot on our heels. We see Lex sprinting for the treeline into the thickest part of the woods. Up ahead, we see Marco’s wolf, Clash, rushing to the treeline from a different direction.

“Careful guys, something’s wrong,” I mind link them as we bolt into the forest after Lex.

“you should have just given her a rabbit, dummy,” Saint scolds. 2

“Not now, Saint. Just catch up to her before she hurts herself or someone else!”

Catching up to Lex is no easy feat. She is just as big as Saint, but in an all-out sprint, she can beat him almost every time. The five of us spread out wide so if we catch up to her, we can try to corral her and lead her back home.

We can’t see Lex, but her scent is strong. She keeps zigzagging through the brush. At first, it seems erratic, but as we keep moving, we realize it is a very intentional pattern.

After what seems like hours, the metallic scent of blood tinges the air. I look at Ghost who looks back at me, clearly worried. In the distance, I can hear the rushing sounds of Blood River. Named for the color of the water, turned red by the high iron content turning to rust.

“Herd her toward the river. Maybe it will slow her down,” I call out when I notice the smell of blood is thicker in the air now.

“Yes, Alpha,” everyone replies in unison, making adjustments to their positions. The closer we get to the river, the slower Lex seems to get. We finally reach the tree line to see her laying in the grass with four dead rabbits laying on the grass next to her and another two mostly eaten close by. ‘

“Stand back, guys. I will take it from here. If I can’t get her to shift, maybe I can at least get her to come back to the packhouse with us.” 1

The four wolves slowly back away as Saint approaches Lex.

“You see, rabbits!” Saint growls at me. 1

“Fine, you were right. Now let’s convince her to go home.”

Saint slowly approaches Lex, tail wagging, excited to see his mate. She thumps her tail on the ground and gladly allows him to sit next to her as she continues to happily munch on rabbit fresh bones.

“Kas, are you there, Baby?” I ask hesitantly. No response.

Lex pushes a rabbit toward Saint so he can join her. Saint obliges and lies down next to his mate. Crossing his snow white paw over her inky black one.

“Look Bronx, I know you’re worried about Kas, but maybe just give the adults a little alone time. I’ve got like eight hundred years of practice dealing with Lex. I will get her back to the packhouse,” Saint tries to reassure me. 3

I think about it for a minute. If Kas is not able to communicate with me, I can at least give Saint a chance to get Lex back to the packhouse so we can figure out what is going on with her.

I look around and try to gauge the time. Probably close to eleven p.m., “Fine, send the guys home and get her back before sunrise.”

“Yes, Sir,” he snarks before cutting off our mind link.